

VOLUME III, NUMBER 1, WINTER 2002

CLAREMONT

REVIEW OF BOOKS

A Journal of Political Thought and Statesmanship



Three Men in a Tub; or the Perils of Progressivism

Jean M. Yarbrough on T.R., Sidney M. Milkis on the 1912 election,
John Marini on FDR and the modern state,
Patrick J. Garrity on imperialism, Frederick W. Kagan on Wilsonianism,
Richard E. Morgan and Anthony Peacock on the Progressive Constitution

Also:

Angelo M. Codevilla: Will We Go to War?
Steven F. Hayward: Reagan Gets His Due
Gerard Alexander: Margaret Thatcher's Prudence
Mackubin T. Owens: The Confederates Won
Larry Arnhart: Redesigning Nature and Nature's God
Joseph M. Bessette: Justice and the Death Penalty
Stephen Forde: Rescuing Ben Franklin
Glenn Ellmers: How to be an American Snob



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MISUNDERESTIMATING BUSH

by Charles R. Kesler

THE DEMOCRATS UNDERESTIMATED GEORGE W. BUSH. THEY'VE ADMITTED as much, though what to do about it has left them in a delicious quandary. The Republicans, by contrast, risk misunderstanding him, even as they prepare to follow his lead in the new GOP-controlled Congress. Combine a misunderstanding with an underestimation and you get a "misunderestimation," a word that Bush coined and that fills a definite need, at least in today's politics.

President Bush is not only very popular, he's interested in doing something with his popularity. The Democrats are just waking up to what he did to them. More interesting is what he's trying to do to his own party. Gradually, he is reshaping the Republicans in the image of "compassionate conservatism," preparing them for what he and Karl Rove expect to be an enduring political realignment in which the GOP emerges as the new majority party.

The strategy is visible most clearly in those races where the administration groomed the candidate. For example, in North Carolina Bush tapped Elizabeth Dole to succeed Jesse Helms. In Minnesota, Bush anointed Norm Coleman and in New Hampshire he encouraged John Sununu, even in the face of an incumbent Republican senator. To be sure, it didn't always work. Richard Riordan, the White House's choice to run against California Governor Gray Davis, lost the primary to the more conservative Bill Simon. Still, Bush tried hard to put a new, more moderate or moderately conservative face on the party.

Of course, presidents often meddle in down-ticket races in order to boost friendly candidates, but if Republicans think that's all Bush is doing, they misunderstand his ambition. Rove has been more forthcoming than Bush himself, speculating to the *Washington Post* that the time may be ripe for a new William McKinley, the veteran Republican politician who crushed William Jennings Bryan in the 1896 election, ushering in almost 35 years of Republican dominance in Washington. McKinley, Rove told the *Post*, "correctly analyzed the political significance of the new, industrial-based economy and understood that the wave of immigration at the turn of the century was creating a diverse population that would require a new kind of politics." Rove added that McKinley "saw that the issues that had dominated American politics since the 1860s had sort of worn themselves out. Neither party could successfully appeal upon the basis of their Civil War allegiances. All those issues had either become resolved or irrelevant."

Sound familiar? Change the "1860s" to the 1960s and you have a standard Bush refrain. We need a way out of the "old, tired argument" between more and less government, Bush told a joint session of Congress. "We should leave those arguments to the last century."

In place of the "old, tired argument" about the size and scope of the national government, Bush hails, as McKinley did, economic opportunity as the key to stability, prosperity—even to integrating immigrants into American life. Like McKinley, Bush thinks the country needs to focus on forward-looking concerns that most people can agree with, like building the "responsibility society." He wants to achieve his goals, he said in the 2000 campaign, without "dividing people." And like the president who won the Spanish-American War, Bush is pursuing a vigorous foreign policy.

To a striking degree, the Republican candidates encouraged by Bush in the 2002 election echoed these themes. They supported the war on terrorism, prescription drugs for the elderly, and Social Security reform. Though they backed Republican tax cuts, hardly anyone offered to tackle the federal government's indiscipline and sprawl. A hot topic was education reform, though few criticized bilingualism, multiculturalism, or racial and gender preferences. Questions about abortion could not be entirely avoided, but these and other issues of sexual morality were referred, often tacitly, to a different office: We need judges who will enforce the law and the Constitution as written!

As a prescription for the modern GOP, McKinley-style Republicanism has real costs and poses a special problem: How do we profit from the lessons of the 1896 realignment while ignoring the standing legacy of the 1912 and 1932 elections? In truth, what McKinley accomplished was to renew (unworthily, in some respects: he punted on Jim Crow) the deeper Republican realignment consummated by Abraham Lincoln in the 1860s.

Bush has no similar bulwark. He operates in a political system decisively changed by the two elections that launched the modern liberal state—elections whose consequences we examine in this issue of the *Claremont Review*. A Republican electoral realignment would have to challenge the premises, at least, of liberal Democratic government, especially its impatience with any limits on itself save those imposed by the spirit of the age. The "old, tired argument" about government's limits and purposes cannot, then, be avoided, certainly not in a realignment that is more than nominally Republican. To think otherwise would be a huge misunderstanding.

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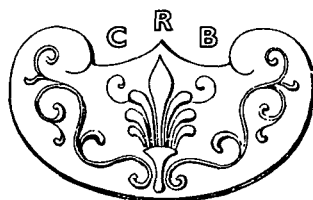
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REAGAN'S TRIUMPH

*Reagan's War: The Epic Story of His Forty-Year Struggle
and Final Triumph Over Communism*, by Peter Schweizer. Doubleday, 339 pages, \$26

The Fifty-Year Wound: The True Price of America's Cold War Victory,
by Derek Leebaert. Little, Brown, and Company, 750 pages, \$29.95

Book Review by Steven F. Hayward

TWO HUNDRED YEARS AFTER THE GREAT Terror of the French Revolution, the causes of that cataclysm remain the subject of lively historical debate. Revision piles on revision, and now and then it is still possible to come up with a fresh synthesis or an original treatment of the subject. The tides of Cold War historiography, likely to ebb and flow for centuries, will rival those of the French Revolution because the enduring controversy in each epoch has a common theme: the role of radical ideology in historical affairs.

Like the French Revolution, the Cold War was the subject of fierce historical revisionism even as the epoch was under way. Most revisionism came from liberals and the radical Left, who suggested that the Cold War was our fault, that it was the result of misunderstanding between the West and the Soviet Union, that the Soviets were merely "insecure," and so forth. Revisionism was not limited to the Left; a strand of leftist-revisionism became popular with the libertarian Right, which still argues today that the United States deliberately started the Cold War in order to expand our government into a "garrison state." The Cold War, many critics suggested, would eventually give way to a stable and harmonious bipolar world as soon as the West got over its "inordinate fear of Communism."

After the Cold War ended in Western victory, the liberal-left revisionists performed a pirouette worthy of Mikhail Baryshnikov. We knew it all along, they said; the inherent instability of the Soviet socio-economic system made it inevitable that it would collapse of its own weight. This from the same people (e.g., Paul Samuelson and J.K. Gal-

braith) who were singing the praises of the Soviet economy right up to the end. If anything, the new tune goes, Western hostility and warmongering delayed the collapse. A more recondite variation is that all credit belongs to that farsighted statesman Mikhail Gorbachev (who, in truth, was a rather dull-witted fellow). *Time* magazine, the house organ of what might be called "Talbotism" (after über-sophisticate Strobe Talbott), named Gorbachev not merely "Person of the Year" for 1991, but "Person of the Decade." And don't forget that it was Gorbachev, not Ronald Reagan, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, though given the squalid gallery of recent prizewinners (this year's went to Jimmy Carter), Reagan should probably be glad not to be in their company.

Above all, no credit could be given to Reagan, because acknowledging him would be an implicit reproach of the establishment intelligentsia. It is simply unthinkable that the Hollywood bumpkin Reagan could deal effectively with the Soviet Union if he rejected the irenic ministrations of the Council on Foreign Relations. Admitting that Reagan bested the foreign-policy smart set would have the most searching consequences for those who, as Reagan once put it, "make a fetish of complexity." Reagan proved that the simplicity of Occam's razor is what is most needed in foreign affairs. Historical argument over the Cold War, like argument over the French Revolution or the American Founding, is a proxy for the fight over fundamental political principles, and has relevance for the present moment. September 11 raised the stakes: It's a straight line from the "evil empire" to the "axis of evil."

The latest entries in the battle of the books

are *Reagan's War* by Peter Schweizer, a fellow at the Hoover Institution, and *The Fifty-Year Wound* by Derek Leebaert, a professor of government at Georgetown University and founding editor of the journal *International Affairs*. Although very different in style and approach, both come to the same conclusion: Reagan won the Cold War—though not quite, as Margaret Thatcher put it, without firing a shot.

Reagan's War is in its main respects an updated and expanded version of Schweizer's 1994 book *Victory: The Reagan Administration's Secret Strategy That Hastened the Collapse of the Soviet Union*. (Many passages, in fact, are virtually identical, though *Victory* seems to have been more vigorously edited.) *Victory* was one of the first books (along with Jay Winik's 1996 *On The Brink*) to present a detailed and compelling case that the Soviet Union's demise owed much to the deliberate strategy and actions of the Reagan administration. Even before he became president, Reagan had laid out his philosophy of how the Cold War should end: "We win, they lose." It was tantamount to reviving the notion of "rollback" that had been abandoned practically at the outset of the Cold War, when the Soviet Union acquired its first nuclear weapons.

The Reagan administration set out to bring pressure to bear on the Soviet Union in at least four deliberate ways. First, through economic warfare, the Reagan team sought to dry up the Soviets' flow of hard currency from the West, which not only hurt their struggling economy but also cut into their foreign adventurism. The economic war came in several parts, including delaying the Soviet gas pipeline to western Eu-

rope, midwifing a drop in oil prices, and slowing the flow of western high technology to the eastern bloc. Schweizer estimates that Reagan's economic strictures deprived the Soviet Union of at least \$15 billion a year in hard currency, at a time when total annual hard currency earnings were only about \$32 billion.

Second, Reagan believed that the Soviets would be unable to compete with the U.S. in an arms race, and he was correct, with the strategic defense initiative the crowning piece of his arms offensive. Third, Reagan decided to turn the tables against the Soviet Union by supporting guerilla insurgencies against its client states and even, in a few instances, against the Soviet Union itself. This step raised the cost of the Soviet Empire in terms of money and blood, most notably in Afghanistan.

The biggest difference between *Victory* and *Reagan's War* is that the latter expands the time line of the story, making Reagan the centerpiece of the action, as he deserves to be. (CIA Director Bill Casey was the central hero of *Victory*.) As perceptive observers have come to appreciate, Reagan's experience with Communist agitation in Hollywood in the 1940s (which was not the McCarthyist misadventure that liberals portray) was crucial to his outlook throughout the rest of his career. In this respect Reagan shared the same hard-won perceptions about Communism as British labor leaders such as Ernest Bevin, who observed in the Soviets the same mendacity that he had seen among the Communist union organizers he struggled against in pre-war Britain. (According to a possibly apocryphal story, when Bevin returned from the Potsdam conference in 1945 and was asked by his Labour Party colleagues what the Soviets were like, he reportedly said, "Why, they're just like the Communists!")

THE PARALLEL BETWEEN BEVIN AND REAGAN in the 1940s provides the ideal portal to a consideration of Derek Leebaert's stunning and original contribution to Cold War history in *The Fifty-Year Wound*. Leebaert has achieved the rare feat of combining an authoritative chronological narrative with acute judgment and interpretation about the principal players and key moments. And Leebaert executes this grand sweep with memorable prose and wit, which sparkle on every page.

The Fifty-Year Wound can be considered a revisionist work, though unlike any revisionism seen before. Some of the nouns in the book's title ("wound," "true price") are misleading, and help explain the confused reception of the book among some conservatives. All wars, even victorious ones, have enormous costs, and not merely in treasure, as the greatest writers on war from Thucydides through Churchill have understood. The atmosphere of crisis that accompanied the

Cold War contributed to, among other things, the heightened politicization of American society. War necessarily involves lots of waste, and leading the West involved diverting billions of dollars to less productive enterprises at home and to dubious enterprises abroad. We often supported squalid Third World tyrants and kleptocrats in order to ward off Soviet advances on the West's periphery, but much of our money ended up in the thugs' private Swiss accounts. Among the lasting encumbrances of our Cold War intimacy with Europe is that today our freedom of action is constrained, whether with regard to Middle Eastern policy or climate change policy.

Part of the Cold War's ferocity and peril was that as it progressed it became a two-front war. The Cold War abroad was matched by the Cold War at home; the phenomenon of anti-anti-Communism arose among liberals who had soured on the justice of the Free World's cause. While the Cold War was ongoing, conservatives and other Cold Warriors were understandably reluctant to acknowledge the costs of the struggle, because doing so lent aid and comfort to the anti-anti-Communists. And now that the conflict is over, the justifiable sense of triumph among those who stayed the course leads them to be disinclined to dwell on their mistakes.

Leebaert negotiates these treacherous cross-currents with near-perfect pitch and refreshing honesty. Beyond just the direct aspects of the Cold War such as diplomacy and military power, Leebaert captures the cultural changes the conflict wrought. Yet Leebaert never indulges any of the fantasies of the revisionist Left or libertarian Right. To the contrary, he devastates the cliché that the U.S. embraced the Cold War in order to establish a militaristic national security state or to become a self-conscious imperial power. Above all, he never questions the necessity of the overall conflict, or expresses any doubt that the Soviet Union was the evil empire that Reagan understood it to be. In fact, near the end of the book, Leebaert is indignant that the Soviet Union isn't regarded as just as evil as Nazi Germany. *The Fifty-Year Wound* is patriotic throughout, realistic ("It would have taken an entirely different United States to have accomplished the task without the usual pork barrels, bureaucratic archaism, and vagaries"), and rejoices that our side won.

The Cold War had a beginning, middle, and end, and, like any epic, is best understood by contemplating the character and actions of its leading figures. Leebaert's character sketches are the strongest part of this muscular book. His highest praise is reserved for Eisenhower and Reagan. George Kennan receives the most damning evaluation, and deservedly so. "Kennan's long career," Leebaert writes, "has come to personify many of

the more taxing habits of America's international behavior: intensely emotional, backward-looking, dismissive of the details of economics and technology, often racist, and occasionally 'reckless' and riddled with 'impulsiveness.'" (And that's one of the more charitable judgments about Kennan in the book.) John F. Kennedy and his troupe come in for criticism, too, followed only by Nixon. "Like many compulsive womanizers," Leebaert writes of Kennedy, "he suffered from a deficiency of excitement."

REAGAN IS THE HERO OF THE ENDGAME, and here again Leebaert displays a compelling talent for character study. "Unlike Kennedy," he writes, "Reagan's disrespect for conventional wisdom was more than the junior officer's impatience with the brass. Reagan took the long view of almost everything. He was an extremely effective negotiator, which is not the same as being tough. He did not rattle, and his faith in America's strength rested on an utter indifference to social class." About Reagan's success Leebaert correctly notes: "It is beyond the laws of probability to believe that this was all coincidence or a matter of being lucky.... The lack of surface arrogance should not conceal his force of will, nor should his modesty in details obscure a confidence in his contribution to the heart of things such as only a great man or fools possess. The hypothesis of foolishness becomes weaker by the day."

Leebaert tells much the same story as Schweizer, though with more of the frisson of the clash between Reagan and the liberal establishment. Leebaert also offers new details about how close we came to the brink of war with the Soviet Union in late 1983, and is scathing at the ineptitude and inaccuracy of the CIA's analysis virtually throughout the Cold War.

Because *The Fifty-Year Wound* does not travel down any of the well-trodden paths of Cold War historiography, its idiosyncrasies have annoyed some conservatives while its contempt for the liberal establishment has infuriated the Talbotts of the world. This has made the book something of an orphan, which is unfortunate and unjust. Leebaert has succeeded in the extraordinary feat of conveying the necessarily tragic dimension of the long-term Cold War conflict without becoming maudlin or sentimental, and without suggesting that it was not worthwhile. His rich narrative deserves to take its place among the classics of Cold War historiography.

Steven Hayward is F.K. Weyerhaeuser Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, and the author of *The Age of Reagan: The Fall of the Old Liberal Order, 1964-1980* (Prima).

INTERESTS HAVE CONSEQUENCES, TOO

Just in Time: Inside the Thatcher Revolution, by John Hoskyns.
Aurum Press, 416 pages, £20

Keith Joseph, by Andrew Denham and Mark Garnett.
Acumen, 458 pages, \$39.50

Friedrich Hayek: A Biography, by Alan Ebenstein.
Palgrave, 403 pages, \$29.95

THE "THATCHER REVOLUTION" HAS FASCINATED conservatives worldwide for its ambitiousness, robustness, and success. It does not seem excessive to say that it provides one of the "master narratives" of modern limited-government conservatism, a narrative composed of three main elements or assumptions. First, a revival of free-market *ideas* made possible the policies which Margaret Thatcher's governments enacted. "Ideas have consequences," as the saying goes, and the Thatcher revolution was a major consequence. Second, once these ideas were in place, failures to implement free-market reforms resulted from failures of will. Third, vast explanatory credit thus goes to Thatcher's legendary obstinacy—dubbed "conviction politics"—which enabled her to succeed where others failed. It is obvious that this narrative is easily adapted to apply to the Reagan-era United States. It is equally obvious that assumptions like these can serve as lessons guiding both scholarly analysis and political strategy.

It is therefore important that, taken together, these three books undermine all three assumptions. These books can be read in several ways, including as (auto-)biography and as histories of economic thought. I will limit myself to discussing how they challenge the narrative described above. Above all, these books provide extensive evidence that we routinely overestimate the impact of "ideas." I don't wish to exaggerate: all three portray ideas as crucial. But these books suggest that Thatcherites found it indispensable to supplement their ideas with a careful examination of how politics was also shaped by material interests, in order to deduce how interest-based obstacles to reform could be evaded, undermined, or realigned. In the absence of such theorizing and strategizing, "ideas" did *not* have certain crucial consequences. To be provocative about it: absent such strategizing, ideas seemed powerless.

If true, this would require important corrections to the free-market narrative. It would mean that failures to reform often resulted from resilient interests which were impervious to ideas and will. Correspondingly, successes often

resulted from subterfuge rather than stubbornness. This means we may be failing to appreciate just how much Thatcher achieved through shrewd, even devious, short-term compromises.

These three studies read like an unfolding telescope. Alan Ebenstein offers the widest view, placing British events in the context of Friedrich Hayek's audacious and lifelong project of restoring limited government as the dominant political system of the Anglo-Saxon world. The apparent success of that project can be measured by "Thatcher's public embrace of [Hayek] as her leading philosophical inspirer." The biography of Keith Joseph narrows the focus by relating the life and career of the man regularly described as Thatcher's intellectual guru or Svengali. John Hoskyns brings us nearer still, through a perceptive insider's account of the few years on either side of Thatcher taking office in 1979.

Hayek's trajectory appears most emphatically to place ideas at the center of discussion. At 32, he left his native Austria to teach at the London School of Economics, beginning a lengthy intellectual struggle against John Maynard Keynes regarding the economic role of the state. Hayek's debatable contributions as a technical economist are indisputably eclipsed by his work as a philosopher of both liberty and science. Most unusually, he successfully integrated his research in economics, epistemology, methodology, and norms, as in his superficially technical but hugely important discussion of the (un)feasibility of economic calculation by central planners. He stands out as one of the great intellectuals of the last century. Ebenstein skillfully crafts his story.

Hayek saw struggle in ideational terms: "I doubt whether it is possible to overestimate the influence which ideas have in the long run." He quoted Giuseppe Mazzini to the effect that "[i]deas rule the world and its events." He was proud of his role in the intellectual Mont Pelerin Society and London's Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), the mother of all free-market think-tanks, founded in 1955. At times, the results of all this effort seemed sadly easy to measure. One of Hayek's periods of depression overlapped with his sense in the late 1960s and early 1970s

that his work was ultimately being ignored. But the mid-1970s brought the vindication of a Nobel prize. A decade later most observers acknowledged that a substantial political change was underway in Britain and elsewhere.

WHAT CAUSED THE SHIFT? KEITH JOSEPH'S career is one way to trace an argument. Joseph seems improbable in the role of one of postwar Britain's pioneering advocates of free-markets. He was unusually self-doubting and self-effacing for a public figure, later saying it was for the best that he neither became party leader nor prime minister. He also defied political stereotypes as one of a number of British Jews who became leading advocates of modern conservatism; others included the IEA's Arthur Seldon, Nigel Lawson, Alfred Sherman (Joseph's own ideas guru), Leon Brittan, and Michael Howard. In 1956, Joseph joined a Conservative parliamentary party which had drifted substantially leftward with time. Altering this direction was daunting. As with Winston Churchill, Joseph's privileged upbringing in no way diminished an agonizing personal need to excel. As a backbencher, shadow cabinet member, and cabinet member, Joseph put in work-weeks long enough to undermine health and his first marriage. He was among the first senior Tories to begin visiting the IEA in the mid-1960s.

Yet in office in 1970-74 and after 1979, Joseph and like-minded colleagues achieved progress on some issues but utter defeat on many, many others. An explanation of the successes must account for the failures as well, and given the pervasive revival of free-market ideas at the time, ideas alone seem a poor candidate for the job. This is not the place to debate just how market-oriented Edward Heath's 1970-74 Conservative government ever tried to be. Suffice it to say that many of the free-market proposals which it did generate quickly met robust resistance from unions, welfare-program beneficiaries, and diverse (often corporate) rent-seekers. As a welfare minister, Joseph found himself unable to bring colleagues or voters around to profound reform. In a familiar story, he found

himself bragging at election-time about spending *increases* on his watch.

The experience was traumatic, and while in opposition in the mid-'70s Joseph sharpened his critique of the statist post-war dispensation, which meant criticizing his party and himself. In 1975 he penned his best-known words: "It was only in April 1974 that I converted to Conservatism (I had thought I was a Conservative but I now see that I was not really one at all)." Thatcher later remarked that Joseph "gave us back our intellectual self-confidence."

Yet despite the intellectual revolution, resistance to market reforms did not cease. Certainly many dragons were slain in the Thatcher years, in privatizations, public employment, tax reform, and capital movement. But many Thatcherite goals succumbed to intense resistance; many others were never proposed to begin with. The fact remains that taxes and spending held steady as a share of the economy and resumed rising almost as soon as Thatcher left office. It does a gross injustice to chalk up all these defeats to failure of ideas or will. Thatcherites also confronted interest groups and vast portions of the electorate which acted as if they were impervious to Hayek's books, IEA studies, and Joseph's speeches. Joseph seemed to recognize that something besides ideas was at work when he began referring to a socialist "ratchet" which "*we, for one reason or another, have not been able to reverse*" (emphasis added).

What might that reason be? At least as early as the 1970s, a number of policy-makers, commentators, and scholars suggested a candidate. They concluded that welfare state programs created vested interests that had metastasized into social structures numbering millions of dependent people. In the words of a Tory journalist, Russell Lewis, "socialism crates socialists." In the language of public choice economics, James Buchanan later insisted that interests were resilient even when shorn of ideological justification; "socialism is dead, but Leviathan lives on." Ideas had some consequences, but not enough of them.

Norms needed to be complemented by a better causal understanding of why certain programs were so politically resilient and how their effects might be evaded or undermined.

THIS IS WHERE JOHN HOSKYNs ENTERS THE story. He is the first to insist that conviction matters; his diary devastatingly described a leading Tory "wet" as a "nice, reasonable and sensible man, hoping to meet stupidity and ruthlessness with concessions and pragmatism." But he insists values needed to be harnessed to hard causal thinking. He joined the staff of Thatcher's shadow cabinet in 1977 and set out to persuade his political superiors that they needed to both pick and sequence their battles carefully. Their itinerary required a viable road-map; his was titled "Stepping Stones." He brought to this task the background of a military officer turned businessman, who tried to strategize more systematically than politicians usually do or believe is worthwhile.

Stepping Stones' details could not survive the vicissitudes of daily political life, even with Hoskyns as first head of Thatcher's in-house "policy unit." But it is notable that Thatcher later said both that Joseph had restored intellectual self-confidence and that without strategies like Stepping Stones, she would not have known how and where to move as postwar consensus collapsed around her. The thinking underpinning Stepping Stones shares with public choice theory the notion that it is analytically erroneous and politically inadvisable either to ignore interests or to expect them simply to be trumped by ideas. Like ideas, interests have consequences, and it was smarter to work with rather than against their grain.

Practical recommendations followed from this, none of which were incompatible with waging a war of ideas at the same time. For example, the Thatcher governments proceeded as if people who had a large stake in government programs and employment were unlikely spontaneously to support slimming the state. Since militant union leaders were an immediate obstacle to almost all

market reforms, the Tories placed union reform near the top of their to-do list. Citizens were to be weaned from public pensions not by public conversion to new ideas but on the contrary by technical policy changes designed to go barely noticed until their effects had taken hold. Of course, it wasn't feasible to buy out all stakes in the state. And Thatcher was generally ruthless in her willingness to backtrack if a proposal tangibly worsened reelection prospects. But these leaders knew they were operating within a web of interest-based constraints, and often acted accordingly.

This makes it all the more impressive that Joseph, like Hayek and many others, was never shaken from his belief that ideas were the decisive thing. This simply cannot be reconciled with many outcomes. Thatcher did not fail to defeat certain types of rent-seeking for lack of "ideas." And does anyone believe that teachers' unions oppose vouchers or that trial lawyers oppose tort reform because of ideas rather than the crassest of interests? For these groups, ideas are fig-leaves, not motivations.

Ideas and convictions provide the goals we seek. But the British experience suggests that, to be effective, ideas must be complemented by other kinds of causal accounts. Joseph insisted that in earlier governments he had lacked the "moral courage" to push through far-reaching change. It is not simply to be kind to Joseph to say that, however true it might be of many politicians, this cannot be the entire story. For one, it does not jibe with Joseph's gradually-developed realization that policy battles had to be picked very carefully and with an eye on both interests and ideas. Here, Hoskyns has much to teach Joseph and even, respectfully, Hayek. The limits of reform in both Britain and the U.S. testify to how much further that work needs to go.

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WAR AT LAST?

All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered abroad.

—Matthew 26:31

The best way to protect you is to find those killers one at a time and bring them to justice.

—George W. Bush, October 31, 2002

BEGINNING ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, THE Bush Administration coupled words appropriate to foreign war with actions that amounted to police work. This reflected intramural ambivalence, perhaps unresolved because of George Bush's own confusion or indecision. But by November 2002, events were forcing the Bush team to choose between making war on Arab regimes and turning American society inside out in a futile effort to protect it—between destroying the regimes that embody the causes for which terrorists fight, and bringing the terrorists "to justice" one by one.

To Be or Not to Be

CONSISTENTLY, PRESIDENT BUSH SOUGHT TO avoid this choice, perhaps failing to understand the difference between war and police action, or imagining that he could reconcile two contradictory lines of policy by pursuing both. To be sure, he gave the impression that he would wage foreign war: he called for no distinction between the terrorists and those who help or harbor them, only between those who would fight alongside us and those who wouldn't. At the same time, however, Bush belied such words by an invasion of Afghanistan calculated less to cut off terrorism at the roots than not to disturb those roots—the Saudi, Syrian, and Palestinian regimes. Indeed, the Afghan invasion seemed to belie the thesis that America's objective in the current war was "regime change." In a similar twist, Bush verbally "delegitimized" Yasser Arafat's Palestinian regime, but continued to protect it and to demand that Israel make it a state.

But by mid-2002 Palestinian suicide bombers (paid by Iraq and Saudi Arabia), and the American public's increasing impatience for results in the "war on terrorism" had forced to the top of Bush's agenda whether or not to make war on the Iraqi regime. This led to a belated, half-hearted assertion of Iraq's links to terrorism, and to the new official reason for "regime change," namely that Iraq threatens the world with "weapons of mass destruction."

Had Bush finally chosen to make war? No. In fact he authorized Secretary of State Colin Powell to state that disarming Iraq would be the equivalent of "regime change," and agreed to one more round of "weapons inspections" in Iraq—guaranteed to find no weapons and put off the day of reckoning. He repeated so often and so sincerely that he had not decided on any means to achieve his ends that even the courtly George Shultz accused him of playing Hamlet.

What was he doing for real? On November 5, 2002, a U.S. remote-controlled Predator drone flying above Yemen fired a Hellfire missile into a car carrying six Arabs whom U.S. intelligence had identified as members of al-Qaeda. This was the first admitted instance in which U.S. forces had fired on anyone outside Afghanistan. This action rose to the level of Israel's strikes against persons believed to belong to terrorist organizations. Like Israel's strikes however, it underlined that the targets were individuals. Because such strikes are not aimed at regimes or causes, they are not measures of war but police actions, adjuncts to "security measures" that no one expects to have protective effect—or ever to end.

The Bush team urged Americans to be patient and vigilant...against one another in general and against no one in particular, lest Muslims in general (and Black Muslims and Arabs in particular) be offended. U.S. intelligence operations were essentially unchanged from before September 11. The Bush team forestalled independent investigation of the intelligence agencies' incompetence, and assured Americans that their government would protect them. In October 2002, however, an American who had adopted the name Muhammed crippled the Washington metropolitan area for three weeks with 13 random shootings.

Charles Colson and Daniel Pipes, among others, have written about the fact that the overwhelming majority of Islamic chaplains in America's prisons are Wahabis, trained and paid by Saudi Arabia, and that the religion they preach to imprisoned criminals (mostly blacks) amounts to blaming America for their troubles. One could hardly imagine anything more incendiary: young men, already inured to violence, already looking for reasons to feel good about themselves and for hating the people who frustrated them and now punish them, being told that, yes, they really are strangers in the enemy's midst, that out there are millions and millions of people, colored like them, who are better than Americans and are with them in

thinking ill of America. It does not take many such recruits to terrorism to make big changes in American life.

In October, we saw the havoc that John Muhammed and his acolyte, John Lee Malvo, caused with the barest of resources. Had they possessed a little training in terrorist technique they would not have been caught. What could a dozen or two such teams do to America? Preparing quicker ways to seal off highways is a path not to victory but to modern Israel's agony.

By fall, the Bush Administration's (and the Republican party's) standing with the American public depended on one factor: President Bush had convinced the American people that he was preparing to make war against America's enemies, and needed support. He could not afford to be seen as reneging on his promises of action, especially out of regard for "allies" whom the American people had learned to disdain. He could stay on his perch only if he got off the edge of indecision and actually made war—successfully.

Yet at the beginning of November, the Bush team was as likely to try to "find those killers one at a time" (lots of luck!) as it was to wage war. The two enterprises, in this context, are as different as defeat and victory.

Victory Means Killing Causes

WHERE DID ALL THE NAZIS GO? WHERE are all those Communists who so recently made up a movement with roots and branches in every corner of the world? Recall for a moment the Communist movement's breadth and depth. The Communist Party was just the tip of the iceberg. Every political party, every labor union, every newspaper, every school, every profession, every social organization had sympathizers with Communism who played a significant role in its life. What made Communism so strong? What made democratic politicians (Reagan excepted) afraid to say that it was evil? No one argued that the Soviet Union recruited every Communist, pulled every string on Communism's behalf throughout the world. It did not have to, any more than the sun has to reach down and turn every sunflower to make it follow its path. Where now are all those people, young and old, who would argue and demonstrate, and scheme and spy and kill and betray for the grand cause of Communism?

They were no more when the Soviet Union was no more, just as sunflowers would cease to

exist were there no sun. As for those ferocious Nazis whom the *New York Times* (all by itself, without orders from Berlin) once thought were the wave of the future, only the name remains, as a hackneyed insult. Human causes are embodied by human institutions. With them they flourish, with them they die. Communists and Nazis everywhere ceased to be a problem when the regimes that inspired them died.

TERRORIST ACTS AGAINST AMERICA ARE A subset of Arab anti-Americanism, which itself is a subset of the hatred and contempt for America that exists in various forms around the world, prominently within U.S. borders as well. To be rid of those who would commit terrorist acts against America, we must deal with the fact that anti-Americanism—both its hatred and contempt for us—has become institutionalized in regimes whose very existence inspires such acts.

Why do people hate? Sometimes, because they have suffered what they consider to be wrongs. America's founders counseled us to have as little political intercourse as possible with foreign peoples, not to interfere in their affairs, precisely because we have little control over what others will consider offenses. Mostly however, people hate not because of anything others do, or even because of who others are, but because they tend to blame others for their own unhappiness. Hence, it is not in the power of America or of any other country to reduce others' hate for it. Even as American troops were liberating France from the Nazis, French intellectuals were telling each other that America was a dastardly enemy. The point is that such attitudes are the problems of the people who have them. We can't change them. The essence of the volumes being written (the best by Bernard Lewis) on "the roots of Muslim rage" is that this rage comes from re-

sentment of their own failures, and is very much their problem.

Our problem is that many of today's Arabs, like yesterday's Germans, like the (unlamented) Soviets, and unlike today's Frenchmen or Germans, have set up regimes that are living, breathing, spawning expressions of hate against us. True, we had something to do with establishing those very regimes. To that extent, Arabs have a legitimate beef against us. But we cannot do anything that would force them to hate us less. Even if, God forbid, we were to fulfill their most strident demand—turn ourselves into raging Jew-haters, and destroy Israel for them—we would earn not less hate but even more contempt.

Contempt is the active ingredient of anti-Americanism. And others' contempt for us is entirely our fault. People have contempt for those they consider impotent. The deadliest contempt is reserved for those who have, or seem to have, great power but somehow cannot use it. Contempt is the bite that the jackal inflicts on the stricken or befuddled lion. It is a cheap substitute for courage. Contempt for America makes vile European intellectuals feel like men. Flouting America with impunity, declaring moral superiority over it, bribing its businessmen and politicians, allows Arab dictators—whether they call themselves kings or presidents—to pretend that they are world statesmen instead of bandits of the desert. And it is our fault, because we let them get away with it.

TERRORISM IS NOT A MILITARILY SERIOUS matter. All the world's terrorists combined cannot do as much damage as one modern infantry battalion, one Navy ship or fighter squadron. Nor is terrorism such a bedeviling challenge to intelligence. It is potent only insofar as terrorism's targets decide to deny the obvious

and pretend that the terrorists are acting on their own and not on behalf of causes embodied by regimes. Terrorism is potent only against governments that deserve contempt. The U.S. government earned the Arabs' contempt the hard way, by decades of responses to terrorism that combined impotent threats, solicitude for the terrorists' causes, outright payments to Egypt and the PLO, courting Syria, a "special relationship" with Saudi Arabia, and a pretense that Islam was as compatible with American life as Episcopalianism. Killing individuals who do not count engenders hatred, while sparing those who do count guarantees contempt.

Victory against terrorists requires precisely the opposite approach: expend little or no energy chasing the trigger pullers and bombers. Rather, make sure that any life devoted to terror will be a wasted life. This means leaving no hope whatever for any of the causes from which the Arab tyrannies draw such legitimacy as they have: people who give their lives for lost causes exist more in novels than in reality. It means discrediting and insofar as possible impoverishing (rather than paying for) Arab regimes that foster opposition to America. It means using military force to kill the regimes—the ruling classes—of countries that are in any way associated with terrorism.

Such regimes cannot be other than matrices of terrorism; they are riding tigers. Should the people who run them try to change, they would perish at the hands of internal enemies. America cannot possibly reform them. The choice is to suffer them, their causes, and their terrorist methods—or to kill them.

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JOHN QUINCY ADAMS ON THE WAR WE ARE IN

IF YOU SAW THE MOVIE *AMISTAD*, YOU MAY think of John Quincy Adams as the genial, idealistic old lawyer Anthony Hopkins played. In fact, Adams was one of the most profound statesmen America ever produced. Adams served one term as president, and had a long career in Congress, but his greatest successes came in diplomacy and foreign policy.

Long before Samuel Huntington, Adams understood our modern "clash of civilizations." Adams believed that history had set the liberal West on a collision course with the Islamic East. In Adams's day, as in ours, many sophisticated Europeans thought that the two civilizations ought to compromise their differences in the name of peace. Unfortunately, Adams found, compromise was not always possible. As then constituted, Islamic civilization would not accept Western notions of liberty, equality, and progress, and for that reason the West had to fight to defend both its principles and its interests.

Adams observed the first chapter of this conflict in the 1820s, when the Greeks revolted against their Turkish masters. Embracing the ideals that inspired the Americans in 1776, the Greeks asserted their right to assume an equal station among the nations of the earth. Most European statesmen, still smarting from the French Revolution and the wars that came with it, were indifferent if not hostile to the Greek cause. The Ottoman Empire, which extended deep into the Balkans (controlling all or most of modern-day Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Romania) was an important part of the European balance of power, and they were loath to see it weakened. That young Romantics like Byron fought and died on behalf of the Greeks only reinforced their belief that serious statesmen must be on the other side. Adams disagreed. Greece was important in itself, but it also carried immense symbolic weight as "the birth-place of moral philosophy, and of high souled freedom." Moreover, Adams realized that the Greek independence movement was the first battle in what would be a long conflict between Islam and the West.

After reflecting upon the conflict, Adams grew concerned that it was serious and feared that almost none of his contemporaries understood it. He thought the matter was of such importance that he wrote a lengthy essay on the subject shortly after he left the presidency in 1829. In this essay, which has become so obscure that even many Adams specialists don't know about

it, Adams set the conflict between the Greeks and the Ottoman masters in the context of the larger course of history. He described the origins of the conflict between Islam and the West, and discussed what was at stake in the conflict.

According to Adams, the key element of the renewed conflict between Islam and the West was that liberalism, the dominant idea in the West, did not even exist in Islamic lands. The reason why the new conflict between Europeans and Muslims was different than previous conflicts was that the modern West's liberty brought with it the technological and social capabilities that made global communication and commerce possible. Modern Western man, Adams declared in an essay he wrote in 1822, "stimulated by all the wants, and aided by all the energies of civilization, proceeds from art to science, and heaps invention upon discovery, till [ships] . . . bear the productions of every habitable spot upon the globe to every other." Technological progress shrank the world, making the isolation of Islam from the West impossible to maintain.

Modern technology put Western Europe in a position to dominate Islamic lands. Whereas Christians and Muslims had once been closely matched on the field of battle, it had ceased to be a fair fight. "In the brutal and foul contest of arms, the man of Mahomet was no longer a match for the Christian man." Adams noted that, with the help of modern weaponry, "a company of London merchants, under the patronage, though with little aid, of their government, [has] subdued in the far more distant regions of Hindustan . . . millions of the disciples of Mahomet." Moreover, the desire for increased trade meant that the West could not stand aside. It would penetrate Islamic lands; the only question was what would the effects be, and what could the West do to make them as peaceful as possible.

Europe's indifference to the fate of the Greeks shocked Adams, just as Europe's moral obtuseness in the Middle East shocks many of us today. Adams criticized "the more than stoical apathy with which they regard the cause, for which the Greeks are contending; the more than epicurean indifference with which they witness the martyrdom of a whole people, perishing in the recovery of their religion and liberty." Adams complained that Metternich and other European leaders thought too narrowly about the war, "seeing in the Greeks only revolted subjects against a lawful sovereign." Much more was at stake, Adams

claimed. Europe's statesmen misunderstood the conflict between Greece and the Ottomans because they thought that Islam was a religion like all the others they knew: they expected Muslims to compromise their beliefs in the interest of peace.

Adams feared that Western statesmen failed to appreciate the Christian roots and context of liberalism. In America and increasingly in Europe, religious freedom had found fertile soil in the Christian notion that religion is primarily about belief and only secondarily about action. Hence, people could be left free to think whatever they wanted so long as they submitted peacefully to the laws. Islam is different; it is fundamentally about law, not about belief. The wish of Islam is that the whole world follow the Law of the Koran. Finding a genuine idea of toleration in a religion that is about law and wants to be universal would not be easy, Adams argued.

The Ottomans understood the fundamental nature of their conflict with the West better than did the statesmen in London and Paris. Adams quoted the Sultan as saying: "this is not like former contests, a political war for provinces and frontiers. . . . This war must be considered purely a religious war and a national war." The Sultan called for all Muslims to fight the infidels wherever they found them because the West and Islam had squared off in a battle for domination and survival. Adams feared the Sultan was correct. "In comparison with these considerations [about the great conflict between Islam and the West]," he wrote, "the question of the operation of these events upon the balance of power in Europe is but the dust of that balance."

In the event Russia came to the Greeks' aid; and fearing Russian success in 1827, France and Great Britain joined the czar in helping to defeat the Turks. Eventually the great powers recognized a small, independent Greek state.

In Adams's day, unlike our own, the U.S. had little power to influence events so far from home. While he was Secretary of State in the early 1820s, Adams had campaigned against even token American support for the Greeks. Adams was the architect of the Monroe Doctrine, warning Europe to stay out of the Americas, and indicating in return that the U.S. would stay out of Europe. In light of that policy, America could hardly take an active role in a European conflict. But Adams did not think the same rules would apply forever.

Pat Buchanan and other present-day isola-

tionists are fond of quoting Adams's July 4, 1821, oration. Regarding the Greek independence movement, Adams said that America "goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own." That was not his last word on the subject, however. In the mid-1820s, President Adams wanted to help the nascent South American republics.

Though Adams thought America in his day should stay out of international struggles beyond the Western Hemisphere, he didn't think that would always be the case. President Washington had said that Americans should have "as little political connection as possible" with Europe. As his diplomatic dispatches from Europe in the 1790s make clear, Adams agreed. Yet President Adams

argued in 1826 that Washington gave counsel for his day, not for eternity: "I cannot overlook the reflection that the counsel of Washington in that instance, like all the counsels of wisdom, was founded upon the circumstances in which our country and the world around us were situated at the time when it was given.... [But] compare our situation and the circumstances of that time with those of the present day, and what, from the very words of Washington then, would be his counsels to his countrymen now?" As the nation grew politically, economically, and geographically, its role in the world would necessarily change.

As the liberal West squared off against the Islamic East, Adams realized that the key question was not whether the modern West would fundamentally alter Islamic civilization, but how it would do so. A century and three quarters later,

the question still stands. Liberalism rose in the West on a Christian foundation. But the situation may not be hopeless. Perhaps Islam and the West may find common ground in the idea that all the Abrahamic faiths share, that God created all of us in his image, and for that reason no man is born a slave. On that foundation, perhaps, we can find a principled ground for accommodation and peace between the liberal West and the House of Islam. Adams, who ended his career trying to remind his own countrymen of the importance of those great principles, hoped that would be the case.

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Book Review by Patrick J. Garrity

THE RELUCTANT EMPIRE

First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made Their Country a World Power,
by Warren Zimmerman. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 544 pages, \$30

THE DECEMBER 1890 ISSUE OF THE *Atlantic Monthly* contained an article by an obscure American naval officer, Alfred Thayer Mahan. For the previous quarter century, Mahan wrote, America had been dominated by "inwardlookingness"—the need to preserve the home market for domestic industries. Mahan professed to see indications of an approaching change in the perception and policies of Americans. They realized that "all around us now is strife; the struggle for life, the race of life." America was a commercial republic, whose economic lifelines to the outside world could only be maintained if the link between product and market was secured by a proper navy and naval policy. "The interesting and significant feature of this changing attitude is the turning of the eyes outward, instead of inward only, to seek the welfare of the country."

Mahan's article—"The United States Looking Outward"—was an effort to popularize some of the ideas in his newly-published *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783*. Mahan had fired one of the first shots in a decade-long political war over the orientation of American foreign policy for the new century, one that saw the United States emerge as a great power and skirt

close to outright, traditional imperialism.

Warren Zimmerman, a distinguished American diplomat who was the last U.S. ambassador to the former Yugoslavia, has written an engaging book on this subject. He focuses the narrative on five major figures who were particularly influential in the establishment of America's global power: Mahan, Elihu Root, John Hay, Henry Cabot Lodge, and Theodore Roosevelt. "The United States had been trying for decades to expand overseas," Zimmerman writes. "Nevertheless, the nature of that expansion, and its consequences right up to today, owes a great deal to the kind of men they were." They were the founding fathers of modern American imperialism.

Zimmerman's treatment of these men is the strongest part of the book. He acknowledges that there was no uniformity of background or views among them, not even between the closest, Lodge and Roosevelt. Nevertheless, their individual and collaborative activities during the decade of the 1890s were indeed critical—if not quite as decisive as Zimmerman claims—in bringing about a reorientation of American foreign policy. Zimmerman gets them just about right, although his portraits are occasionally drawn a bit sharply: Hay is too weak, Lodge excessively

narrow-minded, Roosevelt overly impetuous. Root in particular comes across as an early-day Warren Christopher—the lawyer seeking the best rationale for the often-weak political case of his client, rather than the statesman exercising independent judgment.

Zimmerman insists on calling this period as "the birth of the American empire," with the Spanish-American War as the central event. Zimmerman adopts Mahan's definition of imperialism—"the extension of national authority over alien communities"—because this broader definition implies that a country does not have to own the territory in order to exercise imperial authority over it.

Zimmerman's broad use of the term "imperialism" is unfortunately misleading and imprecise. Every action of a stronger power relative to a weaker one can be deemed "imperialism"—indeed, critics of American foreign policy, on the Right and the Left, have made that accusation repeatedly. In fact, the American political debate over the outcome of the Spanish-American War turned out to be a collective decision that the United States would not become an imperial power. America could not justly acquire foreign territories and govern their peoples permanently

without their consent. The Philippines became an aberration, taken in (temporarily, as it turned out) out of a sense of necessity and honor, rather than as the model for future expansion. At the same time, American leaders did come to regard as legitimate a variety of other instruments traditionally employed by great powers—protectorates, spheres of influence, military intervention, covert action, economic pressure, and the like—all of which arguably impinged to a greater or lesser degree upon the sovereignty of other nations and peoples. But these were not imperialism.

AS THE UNITED STATES APPROACHED THE 20th century, Lodge, Roosevelt, and the others appreciated the need for major changes in the conduct of American foreign policy. The United States was well on its way to becoming the world's leading industrial power. The divided Civil War generation, North and South, was passing from the scene, promising a new sense of national unity and purpose. American leaders could look forward to much greater influence on international affairs if they could develop the requisite tools and political will.

But Americans also felt an acute, countervailing sense of domestic crisis. The Panic of 1893 had been the worst economic slump in American history so far. The United States was in the midst of the painful transition from an agricultural to an industrial economy, with all the social dislocations and violence that entailed, complicated by ongoing, large-scale immigration.

On the international scene, politics and technology combined to present great challenges. The European powers were in the midst of a scramble for overseas territories—a “clash of civilizations”—that seemed certain to spill over into the Western Hemisphere and to threaten the United States’ access to present and future overseas markets, especially in Asia. Improved military hardware and communication technology seemed to have made the world much smaller, and more interdependent, challenging America’s traditional sense of political isolation from Europe.

For most of the 1890s, Americans were strongly inclined to respond to this environment by remaining, or becoming, inward-looking. To cure their ills, they preferred to seek domestic reform rather than turn to external activism. When forced to deal with the world, they preferred (rhetorically at least) to rely upon strengthening international law; or upon unilateral actions, such as currency reform. This general view held across much of the political spectrum, from the Mugwumps to liberal Republicans and much of the business community; and from conservative Democrats (Grover Cleveland) to near-radicals (William Jennings Bryan).

Mahan had attacked this inward-looking

perspective in “The United States Looking Outward.” Roosevelt and Lodge took up the cause in a series of books and speeches over the decade. They argued that the struggle between peoples was the driving force of history. To struggle and to succeed at great and noble tasks was the highest calling of mankind. Great men and nations welcomed those challenges in order to test and strengthen their character. The American nation had the physical potential for greatness and independence, but this had never been fully realized because of the spiritual resistance of those who rejected that struggle in favor of dependence and material ease. Roosevelt and Lodge sought to overcome America’s materialism and commercialism by an assertive foreign policy that revived the old pre-Civil War expansionist drive. Such expansionist sentiment did not necessarily demand territorial growth, although this was not ruled out (with Canada firmly in mind), but it meant above all an aggressive nationalism, a passion to defend and advance American interests and to assume America’s rightful place among the great powers of the earth.

The American foreign policy debate was not confined to these two schools. There was also an emergent, centrist “McKinleyism,” which remains something of a historical mystery. Never fully developed or articulated, it was more of a temperament than a coherent policy. The United States would look outward and play a greater role in world politics, working principally through economic means and cooperation with other great powers, especially with Britain. President William McKinley preferred negotiation to military intervention, but he didn’t rule the latter out. Root and Hay were actually much closer to this moderate, business-oriented activism than to the bellicose nationalism of Roosevelt, Lodge, and Mahan.

EVERYTHING CAME TO A HEAD WITH THE war in Spain, John Hay’s “splendid little war.” The causes of the war, nominally related to Spain’s suppression of the rebellion in Cuba, were less important than the results. The quick and decisive American victory across the globe raised forcefully the question of what sort of great power the United States would now become. The United States had open to it the adoption of a European-style imperialism as it deliberated over how to dispose of Spain’s territorial possessions and, separately, whether to acquire Hawaii. Congressional legislation (the Teller Amendment) had already ruled out formal annexation of Cuba, but other lands remained, above all the Philippines. Zimmerman records McKinley’s famous account, confided to a group of Methodist clergymen:

I walked the floor of the White House

night after night until midnight; and I am not ashamed to tell you, gentlemen, that I went down on my knees and prayed Almighty God for light and guidance more than one night. And one night late it came to me this way—I don’t know how it was, but it came: (1) That we could not give them back to Spain—that would be cowardly and dishonorable; (2) that we could not turn them over to France or Germany—our commercial rivals in the Orient—that would be bad business and discreditable; (3) that we could not leave them to themselves—they were unfit for self-government—and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain’s was; and (4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and Christianize them, and by God’s grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died.

Zimmerman notes that McKinley’s decision was not quite that spontaneous or pious. The president had carefully researched and considered all four options. McKinley had another, unstated concern shared by his key advisors: that America’s failure to assume control of the islands would lead to an all-out scramble for Pacific territory by the European colonial powers and Japan. This competition for the Philippines, coupled with the ongoing disputes over China, could lead to a major Pacific war into which the United States might inevitably be drawn.

The U.S. Senate would have the final say through its deliberations on the Treaty of Paris, which agreement with Spain included transfer (through purchase) to the United States of the sovereignty of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam. The Senate debate was complicated by a growing resistance in the Philippines against provisional American rule. The presidential election of 1900, which William Jennings Bryan attempted to turn into a referendum on imperialism, would later give the public at large a chance to judge the case, but the terms of the argument were set decisively in the Senate during the winter of 1899. Zimmerman’s five key figures had relatively little influence over this debate (Senator Lodge participated but others dominated the floor). The debate turned on whether the United States had the constitutional power to acquire foreign territories without the express purpose of eventually incorporating them fully into the Union; and if United States had the power, whether it had the moral right to annex such territories.

In some cases, pro-annexationist Senators argued frankly that in the modern interdependent world of hostile powers, the United States must

accept the acquisition of European-style colonies and transform itself into an imperial democracy. This required an attack upon, or at least a qualification of, the popular understanding of the original foundations of the American regime. Senator Albert Beveridge was one of the most forceful spokesmen for this view: "The Declaration of Independence does not forbid us to do our part in the regeneration of the world. If it did, the Declaration would be wrong." Senator Orville Platt of Connecticut asserted that the government derived its just powers from the consent of some of the governed. And Lodge explained how to understand Jefferson's phrase:

The Declaration of Independence was the announcement of the existence of a new revolutionary government upon American soil. Upon whose consent did it rest? Was it upon that of all the people of the colonies duly expressed? Most assuredly not. In the first place we must throw out all negroes and persons of African descent.... Conforming to the facts the sentence would read something like this: "deriving their just powers from the consent of the white male governed who have the right to vote according to the laws of the various colonies." ...To pull a sentence out of a revolutionary manifesto and deal with it as if it was one of the labored and chiseled clauses of the Constitution shows a sad confusion of thought.

Such assertions were easy rhetorical pickings for the anti-annexationists, such as Lodge's colleague from Massachusetts, George F. Hoar. "Now, I claim that under the Declaration of Independence you cannot govern a foreign territory, a foreign people, another people than your own; that you cannot subject them and govern them against their will, because you think it is for their good, when they do not; because you think you are going to give them the blessings of liberty. You have no right at the cannon's mouth to impose on an unwilling people your Declaration of Independence and your Constitution and your notions of freedom and notions of what is good." To Beveridge's imperial enthusiasms, Hoar gave this oft-quoted rejoinder: "I have heard much calculated to excite the imagination of youth seeking wealth, or the youth charmed by the dream of empire. But the words Right, Duty, Freedom, were absent."

The anti-annexationists too easily overlooked the strategic and political realities on the ground, however. (And as Zimmerman notes, many of them were governed as much by Social Darwinism—belief in the superiority of the white race—as were their critics.) Senators such as Henry M.

Teller of Colorado worked to articulate a middle ground. The United States, Teller argued, had the constitutional power to acquire territory for reasons of strategic necessity and it could govern the peoples thereby acquired without their formal consent (assuming they could not otherwise govern themselves), but only for the purposes of their moral and physical improvement. Once those peoples were capable of self-government, they should either be granted statehood or other appropriate status as American citizens; or they should be made independent, assuming that either path did not fundamentally jeopardize American security. The theory behind Jefferson's "empire of liberty" would remain unchanged.

The Senate finally approved the treaty, 57-27, a constitutional supermajority which is generally taken as an endorsement of a new-style American empire. In fact, imperialism was broken as a politi-



cal force, especially after the unhappy experience of suppressing an armed rebellion in the Philippines. The anti-imperialists lost the vote but triumphed in the moral arena. The annexationists had the better of the argument about circumstances and strategic necessity, but even they acknowledged that U.S. policy toward the new territories must be moderate, conform broadly with the American political tradition, and accept gradations of political status for the new lands.

FOR HIS PART, THEODORE ROOSEVELT SOON concluded that external expansion was not the best way to regenerate the American character, at least from the standpoint of getting elected. He became focused increasingly on domestic reforms, which eventually separated him from Lodge until World War I revived their collaboration. Roosevelt certainly did not neglect foreign policy while president but his approach—the promotion of great power cooperation and the balance of power with the aim of promoting higher civilization—was arguably a muscular and imaginative application of McKinleyism. Zimmerman's account assumes that the hypernationalists Lodge, Mahan, and Roosevelt brought the more moderate Root and Hay into their camp. In fact, the process may have worked the other way around.

Roosevelt did remain prickly about American interests in the Western Hemisphere, especially the Caribbean, where the vital and vulnerable Panama Canal would soon be completed. The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine justified unilateral American military intervention and temporary governance when Caribbean states behaved unjustly towards their European creditors. Still, as Zimmerman points out, the Corollary limited as well as expanded the American sphere of action. The Corollary was born of a specific need and was hedged with qualifications. When someone suggested annexation of the Dominican Republic as an alternative, Roosevelt responded, "I have about the same desire to annex it as a gorged boa constrictor might have to swallow a porcupine wrong-end-to." By 1907, T.R. even had second thoughts about the Philippines. "The Philippines form our heel of Achilles. They are all that makes the present situation with Japan dangerous. . . . Personally I should be glad to see the islands made independent, with perhaps some kind of international guarantee for the preservation of order."

AMERICANS, THEN, DETERMINED THAT foreign territories legitimately could be acquired and governed on prudential grounds—in extreme and unusual circumstances—as long as they were governed in the interests of their peoples. But were such noble words mere flapdoodle? Here Zimmerman's judgment, as an experienced diplomat, is worth noting. He asks, would things have been better for Hawaiians, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and Filipinos if they had never been under American rule? "The answer is certainly no for the Hawaiians and probably no for the others." In a conclusion that echoes the spirit of McKinley, Zimmerman states:

If Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines remained under the increasingly feckless rule of Spain, their people's lives would surely have been harder than under the Stars and Stripes. Nor would potential alternative colonists like Germany, Japan, or even Great Britain have seemed more promising. If the Cuban and Philippine revolutions had succeeded even in the absence of American support, as would probably have been the case, two weak independent countries would have emerged as a prey to domestic division and foreign penetration.

Zimmerman's favorable judgment is actually somewhat surprising. His narrative is dominated by the downside of American colonial rule, particularly the sometimes brutal American suppression of the rebellion in the Philippines. Zimmerman insists however that "America's

constitutional errors as a colonial power lay less in taking control of the islands than in curtailing the sovereignty of an independent Cuba and delaying the independence of the Philippines." Zimmerman repeats the old objection that Americans were too willing to cooperate with friendly local elites who promised short-term order (Marcos, Diem, and Chiang Kai-shek) instead of realizing that regimes not based on popular consent are usually unstable as well as repressive. But this returns us to square one. Popular consent in much of the world can be un-

enlightened, brutal, and fundamentally hostile to American security. The need to reform that opinion and to undertake humanitarian actions to relieve brutality, leads to pressures for greater, not less, American intervention—in short, a greater inclination to imperialism. That Americans have so far avoided the imperial temptation is much to their credit, but this has not been without cost.

Still, something must be done about the dangers of modern war, ethnic violence, and terrorism. Woodrow Wilson would soon provide a

new answer, one that rejected the great-power nationalism of Roosevelt. Wilson envisioned a progressive internationalism, an anti-imperial imperialism using transnational organizations and norms to civilize mankind. Domestic reform and international activism were to be mutually reinforcing rather than antagonistic. Perhaps Zimmerman will take up that topic, with all its promise and problems, in his next work.

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Book Review by Frederick W. Kagan

WILSON'S NEW WORLD DISORDER

Breaking the Heart of the World: Woodrow Wilson and the Fight for the League of Nations,
by John Milton Cooper. Cambridge University Press, 464 pages, \$35

Wilson's Ghost: Reducing the Risk of Conflict, Killing, and Catastrophe in the 21st Century,
by Robert S. McNamara and James G. Blight. Public Affairs, 240 pages, \$24

SINCE THE END OF THE COLD WAR, America has been pulled two ways. To some Americans, the collapse of the Soviet Union seemed to present an opportunity to turn away from the world and focus nearly exclusively on domestic concerns. Others saw the triumph of 1991 as a validation of 50 years of active engagement in the world and pressed for renewed attention to international affairs.

Before long, the camp of internationalists fragmented, primarily over the issues of peace-keeping and "multilateralism." Some who pressed for continued engagement in the world nevertheless opposed the deployment of American forces to Bosnia, Kosovo, and similar places on the grounds that these operations were a distraction from America's "real" mission. Others argued that America should not act at all, except within the confines of international organizations like the United Nations. A hardy few sought continued involvement in which the U.S. took the lead, while trying to get others to follow. The fight among the "internationalists" became very bitter, and continues to this day. It is an enervating fight, however, and distracting energy and attention from the real issue: Should America remain actively engaged in the world or not?

This tension within American foreign policy is not new. It has appeared in one form or another after almost every significant conflict in American history. In many respects, though, the most interesting and useful comparison is

to American foreign policy after World War I, when many of the same issues were on the table and a similar struggle within the internationalist community took place, to the detriment of America's security. That is why John Milton Cooper's recent work, *Breaking the Heart of the World: Woodrow Wilson and the Fight for the League of Nations*, is so timely. Cooper paints a vivid picture of Woodrow Wilson's increasingly desperate efforts to ram the Versailles Treaty (including the Covenant of the League of Nations) down the throat of an increasingly unwilling Senate. Along the way it becomes clear that the real tragedy in 1920 was not the failure to ratify Versailles, as Cooper believes, but that the fratricidal battle within the internationalist community allowed true isolationism to triumph when it need not have.

Breaking the Heart of the World is a meticulously researched and well-written study of Wilson's efforts. In 10 chapters, arranged chronologically, it describes this struggle, focusing on the fight over joining the League rather than the larger issue of the Versailles Treaty's ratification, and concentrating on Wilson almost to the exclusion of the other principal actors. In particular, Cooper explores in detail how the physical and psychological consequences of the serious stroke Wilson suffered in October 1919 affected his conduct of the ratification negotiations with the Senate. He argues that Wilson's inability physically to play an active role in those negotiations at the critical

juncture left the Democratic Party leaderless and rudderless, while psychologically Wilson became increasingly divorced from reality and stubborn, meaning that such role as Wilson did play doomed the whole effort. Cooper argues that if Wilson had been himself he might have accepted all or most of the reservations that League opponents, especially Republican Senate Majority Leader Henry Cabot Lodge, had attached to the bill of ratification. By failing to do so, Cooper argues, Wilson inadvertently conspired with the Republicans to "break the heart of the world."

The focus on Wilson's mental health before, during, and after the period of the stroke, makes for an extremely vivid narrative of Wilson's decisions and actions. The reader definitely gets a feeling for Wilson's complex, troublous personality; even those who disagree with his views can begin to sympathize with him. After the stroke, however, the book descends into a laborious exploration of the struggle to obtain the necessary super-majority in the Senate to ratify the treaty, and Cooper's inattention to the secondary players really shows. We get glimpses of the character of Wilson's principal antagonist, Lodge, but we never really come to understand his true motivations and feelings, which is unfortunate, for the real tragedy lay not in Wilson's failure but in Lodge's.

HENRY CABOT LODGE WAS NOT AN ISOLATIONIST. He was committed to a view of American great power nationalism similar to

Teddy Roosevelt's. He favored making a security agreement with Great Britain and France, and he deeply feared the results both for America and the world of a U.S. retreat into isolationism. His disagreement with Wilson, to the extent that it was ideological rather than partisan or personal, was not about Wilson's desire to keep America committed to international engagement, but about the precise way in which Wilson wanted to go about securing that engagement. It seems clear that Lodge really *did* want to ratify the Versailles Treaty in some appropriately modified form, and that he was both elated and distraught when the Senate failed to do so—elated because he had defeated Wilson, distraught because he had defeated his own foreign policy aims. For in order to defeat his great adversary, Lodge had had to ally with the true Republican isolationists, such as Senators William Borah of Idaho and Frank Brandegee of Connecticut, who sincerely believed that America should not sully herself in the rough-and-tumble of European imperialistic diplomacy, but should remain a "city on the hill," lighting a course of virtue for the world and leading by moral example.

Lodge was not committed to such views, but he had to work with Borah and Brandegee in order to defeat the treaty. He then found in a truly Faustian twist that the devil insisted on holding him to the deal he had made: in 1920, Lodge could not ignore the isolationists' threats to abandon the party if their views weren't incorporated into the platform. When Warren G. Harding was elected president, therefore, he inherited a foreign policy platform that quickly became isolationist. Lodge had outsmarted himself.

Cooper misjudges the nature of the struggle between Lodge and Wilson. He rightly points out that the disagreement came down to the infamous Article X of the League of Nations Covenant, which called upon all member states to be ready, in effect, to use armed force to protect the integrity and security of the other member states. The true isolationists seized on this article as an "entangling alliance" and a "permanent alliance" such as the founding fathers had warned against a century earlier. Lodge's objection sprang from a different source. He believed that Wilson was trying to make U.S. military, economic, and diplomatic support for the League of Nations a routine, mechanical action that followed inevitably from a decision of the League council. He saw Wilson as attempting to end traditional diplomacy and foreign policy, demanding for the sake of universal peace that the U.S. and other League members abandon critical elements of their sovereignty. Lodge was right.

Wilsonian internationalism rested upon the belief that a strong international body could put an end to traditional balance-of-power politics,

which Wilson detested. The League of Nations, able to call upon the military, diplomatic, and economic strength of its members to enforce its decisions, would deter international conflict, for what would-be aggressor would take action knowing that the major powers of the world would all oppose him? For deterrence to work, the enforcement had to be automatic: if member states could act or not depending on their own political concerns, the entire structure would fall apart. From Wilson's perspective, Article X was, indeed, the heart of the treaty, and Lodge's determination to circumscribe America's acceptance of Article X would have "cut the heart out of the Covenant," as Wilson repeatedly claimed.

For his part, Lodge believed that the United States should ally with the major democratic powers in the world in order to deter aggression and pursue democratic interests in a traditional power-political sense. He opposed the automatism that Wilson had inserted into the Covenant not only because it diminished America's sovereignty, but also because it treated the nations of the world as indistinguishable—none inherently better, more trustworthy or more powerful than any other. Lodge did not believe that. He saw Germany as a threat and England (though having an unfortunate predilection for empire) as a potential ally. He wished to unite the democratic states of the world against the anti-democratic states, not through any automatism but through the conscious commitment of America's power and influence to the right side. Lodge's was the more complex and realistic view of the international scene, and it was most emphatically not isolationist. Neither was it necessarily incompatible with the establishment of an international organization such as the League of Nations.

Among those who favor internationalism, there is a fundamental disagreement over the role and meaning of international organizations. Some, like Wilson, wish to see international organizations keep the peace, and are willing in return to abandon a greater or lesser degree of national sovereignty. Others, like Lodge, believe that international organizations operate effectively only under the leadership of one or more nations that are interested enough to enforce the general conditions of peace.

IN A RECENT ENTRY INTO THIS DEBATE, Robert McNamara and James Blight offer a highly Wilsonian approach to international security in *Wilson's Ghost: Reducing the Risk of Conflict, Killing, and Catastrophe in the 21st Century*. Pointing to the horrors of the last century's wars, much as Wilson pointed to the horrors of World War I, they argue that America's primary interest now and in the future should be to avoid such conflicts. In order to do so, America should

refuse to take action in the world except "multilaterally," that is, under the auspices of the United Nations or in conjunction with a globe-spanning coalition. They explicitly call for a return to Wilson's vision of a world in which aggression is automatically opposed and, therefore, hopeless. They claim that only in this way can we avoid repeating in the 21st century the atrocities and mass killing that scarred the twentieth.

But the world is divided into states that are fundamentally satisfied with the current state of affairs, those that are fundamentally dissatisfied with it but unwilling to risk war to change it, and those that are willing to fight to resolve their dissatisfaction. The successful maintenance of peace rests on the shoulders of those whom peace serves best, the satisfied states. If they commit to use their power and influence jointly to prevent other states from using force to change the world situation, then peace is likely to prevail. If they are unwilling so to commit, then war will likely ensue. This calculation is independent of the presence or absence of international bodies. Be they never so binding, international agreements are unlikely ever to induce states to act against their interests as perceived by their people and their leaders. That is simply not the way states (or non-state actors, for that matter) work. The danger, the great danger, is that the states with an interest in preserving the peace will not be willing to do so, a problem that Wilsonian automatism then or now does nothing to correct.

For all their similarities, however, there is a fundamental difference in the way modern internationalists and old-fashioned Wilsonians approach the question. Wilson, like the isolationists, saw America as a fresh and pure influence in a corrupt, greedy, and violent world. While Borah and Brandegee sought to keep the U.S. out of the muck, Wilson and Lodge sought to use American virtue in order to improve the world so far as possible. Today's Wilsonian internationalists like McNamara and Blight take exactly the opposite view. According to them, it's America that poses a danger to the world through its excessive power and arrogance. The danger they see is that America will pursue its own interests in the world, blindly alienating the other decent states and undermining our ability to deter conflict. For Lodge and Wilson, international agreements would serve to commit America to a world she might otherwise abandon; for McNamara and Blight, they serve to contain America's pseudo-imperialistic tendencies. Now we are the selfish, greedy, aggressive power that needs to be checked.

But the truth is that most of the world's recent "conflict, killing, and catastrophe" has resulted not from American arrogance but from our inattentiveness. Our forays into international

relations, including the use of force and the deployment of troops, have come about almost by a sort of absent-mindedness. Deployments to Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and lately Afghanistan came after successive administrations had made determined efforts to ignore those areas, often despite the pleas of international organizations for us to get involved. In each case, our involvement came too late to prevent much of the violence and killing that McNamara and Blight rightly deplore, and with an inadequate commitment actually to resolve the fundamental problems that had generated that violence. Having failed to concern ourselves with the collapse of Afghanistan for a decade, on September 11, 2001, we paid a horrific price not for greed or aggressiveness, but for forgetfulness and an innate preference for isolationism. It remains unclear even in the aftermath of that horrific attack how committed the current administration is to bearing the burden of keeping the peace.

WILSON WAS WRONG AND SO ARE McNamara and Blight. All three fundamentally misunderstand the relationship between the United States and the world. Like most other states, the U.S. behaves selfishly most of the time, pursuing its own national interests—as the people who elected the government have every right to expect. Like few other states, the U.S. has also behaved nobly in the past, expending the lives of its sons and daughters and considerable treasure to protect

others. This has something to do with the fact that Americans see their national interest partly in universal terms, in standing up for republican government and individual liberty in the world.

At any rate, the U.S. is in a unique position. For 50 years the acknowledged Leader of the Free World, the enormous gap in power and capability between the U.S. and its allies, let alone its enemies, means that the U.S. remains the natural leader. This is a crucial fact that many internationalists ignore. In the era of nation-states, international organizations cannot run themselves. In the absence of a leader, a meeting of equals with diverging views (which describes any organization of independent states) becomes a debating society. Only with a leader to give direction and galvanize action can such an organization play a significant role in shaping world events. And in the world today, the U.S. alone can play the role of leader, for the only possible challenger for that role, the European Union, is itself the epitome of international debating societies.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, American leadership inspired not only the necessary U.N. resolutions but the participation of numerous Arab states in the resulting coalition. If the United States had hung back and awaited the automatic development of the coalition, as McNamara and Blight advise, Saddam would still hold Kuwait. Contrariwise, the U.N. began pressing for action to prevent genocide in the Balkans starting in the early 1990s—nothing happened until America decided to get involved. The cases

of Somalia, Kosovo, and Rwanda are all similar. America leads whether it wishes to or not, and that is the only way that international organizations can function in today's world.

Which is not to say that international organizations are altogether useless. The Wilsonians were quite right that the value of such organizations can be very great. They were wrong, and are still wrong, however, to seek automatism in the functioning of these organizations in a vain effort to restrict the sovereignty of nation states, whether for the purpose of involving the U.S. or restraining it.

But Lodge was also wrong and so are those who ally with isolationists in order to defeat Wilsonian internationalism. It is very important exactly how America becomes and remains engaged in the world. It is important to argue about the role of international organizations and the purposes of America's international involvement. The most important thing, however, is to keep America involved. Our failure to remain engaged in the world after 1920 started a chain of events that facilitated Hitler's rise to power and the beginning of World War II. Our failure to remain actively engaged today could have consequences even more deplorable, and even more unnecessary.

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Book Review by Adam Wolfson

HONOR'S CALL

Liberalism With Honor, by Sharon R. Krause.
Harvard University Press, 288 pages, \$29.95

ON SEPTEMBER 12, 2002, PRESIDENT Bush delivered an address to the United Nations General Assembly that laid out the reasons for taking action against Iraq. It was expertly argued, amounting to a legal indictment of Iraq's numerous crimes and misdemeanors. Bush detailed Iraq's many violations of U.N. resolutions and its unlawful military aggressions against its neighbors; and he excoriated the regime for its use and pursuit of weapons of mass destruction. He also mentioned, almost as an aside, that "in 1993, Iraq attempted to assassinate...a former American president."

The speech was immediately lauded as a masterful and dispassionate analysis. Even foreign diplomats who were previously skeptical of America's intentions admitted that Bush had made the case against Iraq. But then a funny thing happened. Several weeks later in off-the-cuff remarks, Bush referred to the Iraqi strongman as "a guy that tried to kill my dad." These raw, unadulterated comments were, to say the least, not well received by the American media. Many Democrats complained that the president had lost the principled high ground by personalizing the conflict, turning it into a grudge match between the Bush family and the Hussein clan. What these critics were really objecting to was Bush's sense of honor, a sense of honor that was in his case both personal and patriotic. The man Hussein attempted to assassinate was not only his father but also, as George W. had said earlier, "a former American president."

That such honorable sentiments are ruled out of polite public discourse in America tells us a great deal about the decline of honor in America. How many American politicians after September 11 got up and demanded that America's honor be restored after the barbaric attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon? As James Bowman has argued in a recent issue of *The Public Interest*, the language of honor, if not the thing itself, has all but vanished from American public life. Good, decent liberals reject honor as sexist, uncompassionate, and judgmental, while conservatives distrust its amorality. Thus Sharon R. Krause's new book *Liberalism With Honor* has arrived on the scene not a moment too soon. In this important work, the former student of Harvey C. Mansfield and currently an assistant professor of government of Harvard makes the case that honor is essential for a defense of the liberal principles of equality and liberty.

A serious work in political philosophy, Krause's book is also quite readable. Her ambitions are high: She wants to convince liberals (she clearly counts herself as one) that liberal regimes like the United States cannot do without honor. And perhaps even more ambitiously, she wants to restore to political theory a concern with, and study of, "individual agency" and "moral psychology"—that is, the motives that enable human beings to act in complex and frequently dangerous political situations.

Nowadays, as Krause notes, political theorists are largely divided between rational choice enthusiasts, who reduce all human psychology to self-interest, and a bevy of Rawlsians, civic republicans, and communitarians, who believe that humans are motivated out of a sense of obligation to others. But, argues Krause, these theories are inadequate in that they cannot explain the simplest of political actions. They cannot, for example, make any sense of why one day in 1955 Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat to a white man, thus in a single courageous act sparking the modern civil rights movement. What kept Parks planted in her seat was neither self-interest nor a sense of compassion but that complex phenomenon of honor. She would not give up her seat because of what she believed she owed to herself, and what was owed to her. She was a woman of honor.

KRAUSE BEGINS HER STUDY BY DESCRIBING Montesquieu's and Tocqueville's accounts of the place of honor in liberal regimes. She then proceeds in what is certainly the most innovative part of her study to investigate how the sense of honor has manifested itself in America's political life through the words and deeds of the American Founders, the South's Slaveocrats, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Her goal is to show how honor can thwart liberal democracy's greatest threat: majority tyranny.

Some readers may find Krause's examples puzzling. Where are America's great military generals, and why does Stanton earn her attention but not Theodore or Franklin Roosevelt? Also, as she is well aware, the example of the Southern slaveholder points towards just how problematic honor can be when divorced from political principle.

Other readers might object to her treatment of religion. She correctly notes that of late there has been a rise in religiosity and faith-based move-

ments in America, and comments that this is in part a result of "a lost faith in individual agency and an effort to recover it through spiritual resources." She does not look kindly on this effort:

We ought not rely only on religious inspiration, which, particularly when it is fundamentalist in origin, may threaten the toleration, diversity, and individual liberty that are the cornerstones of liberal democracy. To restore faith in the strong capacity for agency that supports liberal democracy in America, Americans need liberal inspirations.

Yet as Krause should have learned from her own research, religion in America is frequently a handmaiden to honor. As she herself notes in her chapter on Tocqueville, "Insofar as religious belief endows the individual with higher aspirations it can support honor, and Tocqueville approves of it, especially in democracy." She then quotes Tocqueville's well-known observation that "it is particularly in times of democracy that it is important to make spiritual opinions reign."

She might have also learned of religion's importance from her character study of Martin Luther King, Jr., but in an unfortunate oversight she makes only passing reference to the Reverend King's religious faith. King's ability to act politically, however, from his willingness to risk his own life to his articulation of America's liberal principles—that is, his "individual agency"—is almost unfathomable without reference to his religious faith. King's belief, in particular, that suffering is redemptive was the linchpin to much of his political activity and advocacy. This religious belief gave him the wherewithal in life-imperiling situations to act honorably and in service of his country's highest ideals.

However, if Sharon Krause has overlooked the important role religion plays in bolstering individual agency in liberal democratic orders, she has restored honor to its honorable place in our understanding of liberal theory and practice. And in the world disorder following September 11, when Americans will have to dig deep within themselves to defend their way of life, this is no small contribution.

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AGAINST REASON

Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity,
by Darrin M. McMahon. Oxford University Press, 262 pages, \$19.95

IN THE SPRING OF 1778, VOLTAIRE'S FINAL play, *Irène*, opens at Paris's *Comédie française* to rave reviews. The aged *philosophe*, once persecuted and exiled, is now a national hero. Leaving his sickbed at the sumptuous Hôtel de Ville, he musters enough strength to attend a performance. An admiring throng, in a fever-pitch of excitement, surrounds and follows his carriage as it spirits him to the theater; within the hall, the crowd greets him with wild applause: "Long live our Homer!" It is an Enlightenment apotheosis. The French Revolution is little more than a decade away.

Darrin M. McMahon, a talented young historian at New York University's Remarque Institute, opens his first book with a vivid account of Voltaire's final triumph. His real interest, though, is in those French men and women who viewed it, not with joy, but with a sense of impending doom—the "anti-*philosophes*," as they called themselves. These individuals, many of them Catholic, argued that the rationalism, individualism, and secularism of *philosophie* "augured regicide, anarchy, and the annihilation of religion." For them, the French Revolution was the culmination of their darkest fears, the violent, monstrous issue of bad ideas.

Constituting a "Counter-Enlightenment," the anti-*philosophes* were a diverse lot: Catholic clergymen, traditionalist bourgeois, conservative parliamentarians, aristocrats, journalists, and many others. Most accounts of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, McMahon points out, pay "relatively little attention" to these contrarians. True, the British political thinker Isaiah Berlin, who first coined the term "Counter-Enlightenment," wrote intelligently about a few great minds among them—Joseph de Maistre, J. G. A. Hamann, J. G. Herder. But McMahon rejects Berlin's focus on "so-called men of ability." Instead, he seeks to recreate the mental universe of lesser talents—forgotten writers such as Madame de Genlis and Augustin Barruel, who, he claims, belonged to a ferocious French subculture of anti-Enlightenment attitudes and beliefs.

If shining new light on this subculture is McMahon's narrow scholarly purpose, he also has far grander aims. One is to describe the origins of our current culture wars. "Dwelling on the dark underside of modern rationalism, individualism, and materialism," he writes, is the

"right-wing vision" of the world. In this vision, as modern as the Enlightenment ideas it opposes, human nature is intrinsically corrupt; religion is essential to maintaining social order, and intellectual and moral license and abstract rights are dangerous social corrosives; family and history are crucial to human flourishing; political sovereignty must remain intact; and throne and altar must forever join together. Two centuries of liberal democracy have left the latter two aspects of the "right-wing vision" politically dead. The rest of it, however, still shows up in the pronouncements of today's conservatives, especially those of the "religious Right." For McMahon, modernity is an ongoing battle between Enlightenment progress and Counter-Enlightenment reaction.

MCMAHON IS A PARTISAN OF THE Enlightenment side in this conflict. He decries the "Manicheism" of the anti-*philosophes*, and describes their yearning for wholeness and social unity as romantic utopianism, a quest for a "mythic" golden age. He bloodlessly talks of Robespierre's "excesses," but characterizes Counter-Enlightenment thinkers as "rabid" and "obsessed." Most of the Right's verbal attacks on their enemies, he asserts, were "vastly overstated and grossly unfair"—"a construction, a linguistic creation to a far greater degree than any reflection of social reality."

In fact—and this is another key thesis of the book—the "excesses" of the French Revolution, McMahon holds, were partly the fault of the anti-*philosophes* themselves. McMahon brushes aside French historian François Furet's argument that the revolutionary Jacobins were proto-totalitarians, frenziedly imagining conspiratorial enemies around every corner. "The Revolution did not need to invent its enemies," he says. "They were there from the outset, and their presence exerted a powerful influence on the dynamics of the revolutionary process." The Terror was born from the clash of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary extremes, not from any intrinsic revolutionary logic.

McMahon has performed a great service in bringing to life the lost world of the French Counter-Enlightenment and its international echoes in Italy, Germany, and even North America. He is a good enough scholar to let this world speak for itself, from the pre-Revolutionary period through the Revolution and

on to the Napoleonic era, the Restoration, and up to the revolution of 1830, when the Bourbons finally fell. He exhibits an impressive mastery of source material, quoting extensively from obscure rightist journals and moldering counter-revolutionary books and pamphlets, long unread. He is an artful and clear writer. Occasionally, he resorts to academic buzzwords—writing of anti-*philosophe* literary "production" and "discourse," for example, and lamenting masculine "hegemony"—but these annoying terms crop up rarely, and seem out of place, as if he had to insert them to get past an especially politically correct thesis advisor (the book originated as a doctoral dissertation). To his credit, too, McMahon, like Berlin before him, illumines a dangerous irrationalism that some opponents of the Enlightenment, from de Maistre on the Right to Michel Foucault on the Left, have promoted as an alternative to the Reason of the *philosophes*.

But whatever his virtues as a scholar and writer, McMahon's broader claims are dubious. Consider his argument that the anti-*philosophes* presented a wildly exaggerated image of their enemies and of the threat they posed. This is absurd, and undermined by his own evidence. The exemplars of the French Enlightenment were militantly hostile to everything the anti-*philosophes* held dear, as reading a few pages of Voltaire or Diderot is enough to show.

The *philosophes* did seek to destroy religion—the "infamous thing"—and revolutionize society, from top to bottom. They did believe that human sinfulness was a myth, propagated by the fanatical and prudish Catholic Church. They celebrated tolerance but were fiercely intolerant—illiberal liberals, nearly to the man.

And once in power, they were ruthless. The trajectory of the French Revolution is one of ever-increasing tyranny. In November 1789, the revolutionaries—explicitly embracing the ideas of the *philosophes*—nationalized all church property. The next year, they shuttered France's myriad convents and monasteries and passed a law that made all clerics state officials, elected by the laity, including nonbelievers.

Indeed, the revolutionaries sought to de-Christianize France entirely, destroying churches, desecrating altars, and forcing priests and nuns to marry. The Reign of Terror of 1793 and 1794 just upped the ante, unleashing the

kind of ideologically motivated slaughter that would set apart the 20th century's totalitarian movements.

MCMAHON'S ATTEMPT TO PIN PART OF THE blame for this "excess" on the machinations of a powerful French Right is laughable. First of all, it is unfair. How should defenders of religion and tradition have responded? Should they have just gone along as the state closed churches and drove priests from the country? Should they have remained silent as the revolutionaries moved Voltaire's remains from his former estate at Ferney to the Church of Sainte-Geneviève, now renamed the Pantheon? But more to the point, McMahon admits that, at least in the early years of the Revolution, the men and women of the Right were a "relative minority," a "fringe" that posed no "direct military threat to the Revolution and in fact, given their Catholic convictions, were never unanimous in sanctioning armed resistance." These were the guys who provoked the revolutionaries to start

lopping off heads and filling mass graves? Only by existing, apparently.

Ultimately, McMahon denies the French Revolution and its intellectual architects their true radicalism. The Revolution, especially during the Terror, was the archetype of what the French political theorist Raymond Aron called "secular religion"—investing man with the faith once reserved to God. Fittingly, Notre Dame Cathedral became the Temple of Reason on November 10, 1793, as blood flowed copiously from every corner of France. Subsequent experiments in secular religion have proven even more lethal. The French reactionaries would say: I told you so.

The implication of McMahon's book is that resistance to the militantly secular Enlightenment is futile, and can only lead to ruin. It is either religious authoritarianism or the *New York Times*. But the American example suggests otherwise. Here, religion and Enlightenment have not always been hostile forces, but have worked together, lifting the nation on the two wings of faith and reason, as social thinker Michael No-

vak recently put it.

The American revolutionaries, unlike their French counterparts, had a deep sense of man's imperfections and were no utopians; the reason they embraced was not the hubristic rationalism of the French Revolution but the humble "common sense" of the Scottish Enlightenment: more Adam Smith than Voltaire.

This spirit of reconciliation of religion and reason has been a source of endless strength and renewal for America, though it has come under fire from our cultural elites over the last several decades. McMahon seemingly would have us abandon this spirit outright, and if not celebrate the secular Enlightenment, like the revelers at Voltaire's apotheosis, then at least accept its permanent triumph.

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Book Review by Steven Forde

THE SAGE OF PHILADELPHIA

Benjamin Franklin, by Edmund S. Morgan.
Yale University Press, 368 pages, \$24.95

Franklin: The Essential Founding Father, by James Srodes.
Regnery, 450 pages, \$34.95

JUDGING FROM THE WEALTH OF NEW BIO-ographies issuing from American publishing houses these days, the Founding Fathers are enjoying a renaissance. This is a development very much to be applauded. With a pair of new biographies this year, Benjamin Franklin now joins the parade.

During his lifetime, Franklin was, except for George Washington, the most famous American in the world. It's widely accepted that large numbers of Americans supported the proposed Constitution of 1787 principally because they knew that Franklin and Washington endorsed it. Franklin loomed large in the American pantheon for generations thereafter, where he occupied a special place as Poor Richard, man of the people, model Everyman. Perhaps this made him better-loved than other founders, but it also made his reputation unusually vulnerable to the vicis-

situdes of popular culture—to the point where, in some representations today, he is recognizable as the Founding Father in sunglasses with marijuana leaves imprinted on them.

These new biographies go a long way toward rescuing Franklin from this kind of inanity. Whether or not we label him "The Essential Founding Father," as Srodes does, Franklin played a critical role in the development of American liberty. He spent decades abroad, first in a futile attempt to defend American liberties in London, then in a successful attempt in Paris to secure French support during the War of Independence. French assistance, in money, naval protection, materiel, and finally even troops, was indeed critical to the securing of American nationhood. It required all of Franklin's diplomatic skill to deal simultaneously with the French court and with the often obstreperous and paranoid fel-

low-commissioners dispatched to Paris by the Continental Congress. Finally, he returned to the United States to play a secondary role in framing the new Constitution, but a primary one in securing its ratification.

Franklin's story makes for excellent biography. His origins were humble but respectable, the 15th child of a Boston tallow-chandler. He loved to read from an early age, and was formed by the writings of Plutarch and Xenophon, as well as Cotton Mather and Daniel Defoe. His reading of the anti-Deist tracts in his father's small library had the effect of making him a "thorough Deist." This, together with his fondness for Socratic disputation, garnered him a bad enough reputation that he felt compelled to leave Boston. Thus he became Franklin of Philadelphia, whose legendary industry and frugality, along with his skill as a writer, allowed him to prosper

sufficiently in the printing business that he could retire at age 42.

This was the end of one career, but the beginning of many others. Public service was the creed of Cotton Mather and Daniel Defoe, and Franklin from his youth combined it with his gently biting wit. While a mere printer's apprentice in Boston he invented the persona of Silence Dogood, whose satirical pieces appeared in his brother's newspaper. Her satire had the serious purpose of exposing the moral foibles and hypocrisies of her fellow-citizens, to put them in the way of moral improvement. This task was taken up in later years by the likes of "the Busy-Body," and above all Poor Richard, all of whom used homespun wit to chide Americans to virtue.

Upon his "retirement," Franklin added more conventional forms of public service to his repertoire, entering the colonial legislature, serving as colonial postmaster (where he vastly increased the efficiency of the service), and ultimately emissary to London and Paris. It was in these years also that Franklin conducted the researches into electricity that gained him an international reputation, including membership in the Royal Society and other learned societies in Europe. It is not always appreciated today that despite Franklin's lack of formal training in the field, his work in electricity was pathbreaking and in every way worthy of the honors bestowed upon it. Yet, as both our biographers point out, he regarded this work (and his other scientific pursuits, from researching the nature of the Gulf Stream to developing the efficient and smokeless "Franklin stove") as another form of public service. In this respect, he was the very spirit of modern, technological science: knowledge accumulated for the purpose of improving human comfort and happiness.

These two biographies give us remarkably similar Benjamin Franklins, though Srodes makes a better story of it. Both make Franklin's greatness eminently visible, but scorn the hagiography of earlier biographers. In both, we see Franklin's personal and political failures as well as his triumphs. He was a famously warm and convivial companion, but could also be cold and cutting. He made enemies as well as friends, and might occasionally have been misled by animosity. He spent years combating the heirs of William Penn, proprietors of the Pennsylvania colony, over their exemption from taxation. He tried unsuccessfully to displace them entirely and put the colony under royal stewardship. Was this wise, given the increasingly harsh nature of royal policy? Was it worth the time Franklin expended on it, and the aggravation it created? Similarly, Franklin may have lost touch with American sentiment when he responded with resignation to the Stamp Act and was surprised at the violence of the colonial response. Though

it was his job to defend colonial interests in London, he was slower than many back home to see the threats that that evolving colonial policy presented. Being a generation older than most of the revolutionaries, perhaps he was more loath to give up on what he once called "that fine China vase, the British Empire."

Still, Franklin was a quick study. Once he saw the colonial reaction to it, he became instrumental in the repeal of the Stamp Act. Once he saw the bullheadedness of George III and a succession of ministries in London, he took an increasingly stalwart position in favor of American rights—to the point that George III eventually came to see Franklin as the entire motive force behind American recalcitrance. When he finally returned to America in 1775, Franklin was ahead of most of his colleagues in the Continental Congress in seeing independence as the only viable course of action.



The evolution of his views on matters like these leads both our biographers to make a theme of Franklin's personal development. This will perhaps be the temptation of any biographer, and it has its warrant in the case of Franklin, but it leads both our authors to underplay the unchanging core of the man. In his *Autobiography*, Franklin claims that he came rather early to a set of fundamental moral beliefs that guided him through life. Shifts in his position on the empire, or even on the rights of the colonies, are not real changes if they represent nothing more than applications of the same moral outlook to different circumstances.

Franklin's moral outlook was distinctive in some respects. Unlike many of his fellow-revolutionaries, he resisted seeing right and wrong in terms of *rights*, particularly rights of man. He was closer to David Hume (whom he knew rather well) in holding that utility or public hap-

piness was the true touchstone of correct policy. Morgan is especially good at bringing out this aspect of Franklin's thinking, and the dilemmas it created for his diplomacy. "Rights" were too abstract, rights rhetoric too combative, and seeing issues as clashes of rights made political compromise difficult if not impossible. Franklin's approach had the contrary virtues, but might have made him initially too willing to compromise on colonial grievances. In the end, he too made use of the revolutionary language of rights, but always, one suspects, with a slight wince.

A similar distance between Franklin and many of his fellow founders was visible in the Constitutional Convention of 1787. Franklin, now over 80 years old, played a relatively minor role. His views were generally more populist than his colleagues', and virtually all the positions he explicitly supported were rejected by the convention. Nonetheless, he supported the final document, he said, because none better could be expected, because the precise form of government is less important than how it is administered, and because republics depend more on the spirit of the people in any case than on the outline of their institutions. Abstract notions of government carried less weight with Franklin than the concrete result of good government.

FRANKLIN MAY WELL HAVE UNDERESTIMATED the importance of theories of government, but his concern from his earliest days in Boston was the cultivation of the private and social virtues needed to support free government, whatever its form. If he made a distinctive contribution to the fashioning of the American experiment, it was this. Silence Dogood, Poor Richard, and even Franklin's *Autobiography* are all vehicles for spreading these virtues abroad. His view of the virtues themselves remained essentially constant through his life. Industry and frugality, and other virtues of economic self-reliance, are the best-known. Franklin understood that these must come first for people who begin life with little, and subsequent history has affirmed their importance to the success of free societies. But he was also concerned to cultivate virtues of public service, for a society of individualistic self-reliance needs these fully as much as the economic virtues.

Franklin's view of moral matters was to some degree unconventional. He held that morality is defined by what serves individual and social happiness, and only accepted the discipline of virtues that contributed to those ends. The economic and public-spirited virtues qualified, but Franklin was not shy of repudiating or relaxing others that did not. Thus his famous, loophole-ridden definition of Chastity: "Rarely use Venery but for Health or Offspring; Never to Dulness [sic],

Weakness, or the Injury of your own or another's Peace or Reputation." John and Abigail Adams were wrong to dismiss Franklin as a "libertine," but he was no Puritan. Though he respected all or nearly all religious opinions, he judged them on their support of social morality. He advocated a theology in which God's plan was little more than the advancement of personal happiness in this life, and service to others. If even God served social utility, what could possibly be above it? Franklin was of the opinion that property was

largely a creature of society, and could be regulated and even limited for the general good. He was rebuffed in at least one attempt to place a statement to that effect in the Pennsylvania Constitution. There is some truth to the "countercultural" portrait of Franklin.

If the two biographies before us have a shortcoming, it is their failure to find the nerve of moral thought that makes sense of these diverse positions, and rescues Franklin's consistency over time. Biographers can be

forgiven for focusing on the large, world-scale events that give their subject historical weight. Both our authors do a good job of this, and of sketching Franklin's character, within the scope of modestly-sized books. May they give readers the hunger to return to the source, and find additional food for thought in this complex and delightful man.

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Book Review by Mackubin Thomas Owens

HOW THE CONFEDERATES WON

Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory, by David W. Blight.
Harvard/Belknap, 512 pages, \$29.95

IT HAS BECOME SOMETHING OF A CLICHÉ TO observe that the Civil War remains the central event in American history, a cataclysm that casts a long shadow over the United States even today. But the meaning of the Civil War depends a great deal upon how it is remembered. Recent debates over such issues as whether Virginia should celebrate April as "Confederate History Month," whether the city of Richmond should include a mural of Robert E. Lee as part of its Canal Walk along the James River, or whether the Confederate battle flag should fly over the South Carolina Capitol or even on its grounds, indicate that there is substantial disagreement over the war's enduring significance.

How we remember the Civil War is the subject of David Blight's excellent *Race and Reunion*. In this wide-ranging cultural history of the half-century following the war, Blight examines Reconstruction, the soldiers' reminiscences of battle, the emergence of a romanticized South in the popular literature of the day, competing African-American memories of slavery and the war, and the ritual of Memorial Day.

According to Blight, the post-war era engendered three competing memories of the conflict. One, arising out of the Emancipation Proclamation and Lincoln's Second Inaugural, remembered the war as a struggle for freedom, a rebirth of the Republic that led to the liberation of blacks and their elevation to citizenship and constitutional equality.

A second, the "Blue-Gray reconciliationist"

view, developed out of the necessity for both sides to deal with so many battlefields and so many dead. It focused almost exclusively on the sacrifices of the soldiers, avoiding questions of culpability or the right and wrong of the causes. In this view, the war was the nation's test of manhood. There was nobility on both sides. The essence of this view was captured by Lew Wallace, a Union general who wrote *Ben Hur*: "Remembrance! Of what? Not the cause, but the heroism it evoked."

The reminiscences of the soldiers who fought the war lay at the heart of this view. Most symbolic of this memory were the Blue-Gray reunions in which soldiers of both sides gathered for "fraternalism and forgetfulness." The soldiers, writes Blight, sought to "reassemble the chaos and loss inherent to war into an order they could now control. While doing so, they cleaned up the battles and campaigns of the real war, rendered it exciting and normal all at once, and made it difficult to face the extended political meanings of the war."

The third memory was the white supremacist vision arising in part from the Democratic Party's counterrevolution against radical Reconstruction. The South may have lost the war, according to this view, but it triumphed over Reconstruction and the radical Republican legacy of corrupt, carpetbagger government and the anarchy of Negro rule. It restored labor discipline and economic dependency among blacks, thereby saving white civilization.

The white supremacist view was reinforced by the "Lost Cause" account of the Civil War. As Edward A. Pollard wrote in the 1867 book that gave this interpretation its name, "all that is left the South is the war of ideas." The essence of the Lost Cause thesis was (and remains) that the war was not about slavery, but "states' rights." It is neatly summarized in an 1893 speech by a former Confederate officer, Col. Richard Henry Lee. "As a Confederate soldier and as a Virginian, I deny the charge [that the Confederates were rebels] and denounce it as a calumny. We were not rebels, we did not fight to perpetuate human slavery, but for our rights and privileges under a government established over us by our fathers and in defense of our homes."

The Lost Cause interpretation of the war was the South's response to physical destruction and the psychological trauma of defeat. In this view, the Old South was a racial utopia, an organic society composed of loyal slaves and benevolent masters. The war pitted this "slave democracy" against the "free mobocracy" of the North, and the noble side lost. The matchless bravery of the Confederate soldier succumbed to the "juggernaut of superior numbers and merciless power." As Robert Penn Warren once wrote, "in the moment of its death, the Confederacy entered upon its immortality."

THE ARGUMENT OF RACE AND REUNION is that the imperative of regional reconciliation in the name of national unity led to

the emancipationist view's eclipse by an alliance of the reconciliationist and white supremacist views, because the South would permit reconciliation only on its own terms. Its own racism led the North to acquiesce in this bargain. In the words of one writer cited by Blight, "Boston...and Ohio hold the coat of Georgia and Mississippi, while they slay the common victim of Northern prejudice and Southern hate." Accordingly, while the nation healed its wounds, it did so at the expense of justice.

Race and Reunion begins with the 1915 visit of President Woodrow Wilson to the Blue-Gray encampment at Gettysburg on the anniversary of the great battle. This encampment was the great symbol of the extent to which reconciliation had progressed. Wilson's appearance was particularly important, as he was the first Southern president since before the Civil War. The United States stood on the verge of entering a world war, and it was critically important that the scars of the Civil War not prevent America's emergence as a world power. But reconciliation came at a cost. The divide between white Americans in the North and the South had been bridged at the expense of African-Americans.

In the war's immediate aftermath, the emancipationist view had been ascendant in the North. Northern politicians frequently "waved the bloody shirt" of treason and rebellion, and there was a strong consensus that the South should be punished for starting the conflagration. In the words of Gov. Oliver Morton of Indiana, "the rebellion, the offspring of slavery, murdered its unnatural parent, and the perfect reign of liberty is at hand." After the failure of presidential Reconstruction, the radical Republicans in Congress imposed their own version. But the South was defiant and raised Reconstruction's cost, and the North did not possess the will to see it through.

As Southerners embraced the Lost Cause rationale for the war and Northerners tired of Reconstruction, both sides seemed willing to heed Horace Greeley's admonition to "clasp hands across the bloody divide." The danger of this bargain was apparent to Frederick Douglass, who, on the centennial of American independence, won-

dered "if war among the whites brought peace and liberty to the blacks, what will peace among the whites bring...? In what position will this stupendous reconciliation leave the colored people?"

Douglass's fears were well-founded. The United States had become a society committed to sectional reconciliation, at the cost of forgetting the African-Americans—especially the black soldiers who had swelled the ranks of the Union army—and their claims to citizenship and political equality. The trend was apparent in both popular literature and politics. As reconciliation à la the Lost Cause progressed, blacks were, in the words of one contemporary writer, reduced in popular literature to two roles: "the devoted slave who served and sacrificed for his master and mistress, or the 'poor nigger' to whom liberty brings only misfortune." The actual African-American experience of slavery and war was pushed aside by the romanticized South created by such popular "dialect writers" as Thomas Nelson Page and Joel Chandler Harris, creator of the Uncle Remus tales. In politics, the Supreme Court in 1883 struck down the Civil Rights Act of 1875, paving the way for Jim Crow.

As reconciliation pushed the emancipationist view aside, the result was what Blight calls the "collective victory narrative." According to this, the Civil War was a noble test of national vigor between two adversaries who believed firmly in their respective causes. The war was followed by an interlude of bitterness and wrong-headed policy during Reconstruction. The war was an heroic crisis that the United States survived and a source of pride, proving Americans could solve their own problems and redeem themselves in unity. The Civil War was the original "good war," a necessary sacrifice, a noble mutual experience that in the long run solidified the nation.

This is the view that prevails for the most part among Americans today. It is visible in popular Civil War magazines like *Civil War Times Illustrated* and *Blue and Gray*. It is visible in Civil War art by such artists as Morton Kunstler and Don Troiani. As Blight explains, such popular history and art reflect a longing for some

transplanted, heroic place in the 19th century in which the troubling issues of race and slavery are banished from the discussion.

But this vision is a myth. Blight cites Roland Barthes on myth: it strives to "organize a world which is without contradiction, because it is without depth, a world...[of] blissful clarity: things appear to mean something by themselves." Today, of course, this comfortable myth of the war is under attack, as illustrated by the debates I mentioned at the outset.

The most sustained attack today comes from the multiculturalists of the Left, who seek to expose what they charge is the systemic racism that lies at the very heart of America. This accounts in part for the fervent defense of the South by many conservatives. But the leftist charges are slanderous, as more and more Civil War historians are pointing out.

Yet how does one attack the myth without aiding the cause of the multiculturalist critics of America? As readers of the *Claremont Review of Books* know, the most consistent restatement of the emancipationist account has been advanced by Harry V. Jaffa. In his account of Lincoln and the Civil War, Jaffa has sought to reconcile the outcome of the war—"a new birth of freedom"—with the principles of the American Founding. For Jaffa, as for Frederick Douglass, the Civil War must be understood as a moral drama. As Douglass remarked, "there was a right and a wrong side in the late war that no sentiment ought to cause us to forget." This is the most fruitful way to reinvigorate the emancipationist view without giving aid and comfort to the multiculturalists.

Blight shows that the great tragedy of Civil War memory is that the emancipationist account of the war was sacrificed to reconciliation in alliance with white supremacy. The challenge is to link emancipation with reconciliation. Jaffa's *A New Birth of Freedom* is the antidote for the ills so skillfully diagnosed by David W. Blight in *Race and Reunion*.

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WHY THE ELECTION OF 1912 CHANGED AMERICA

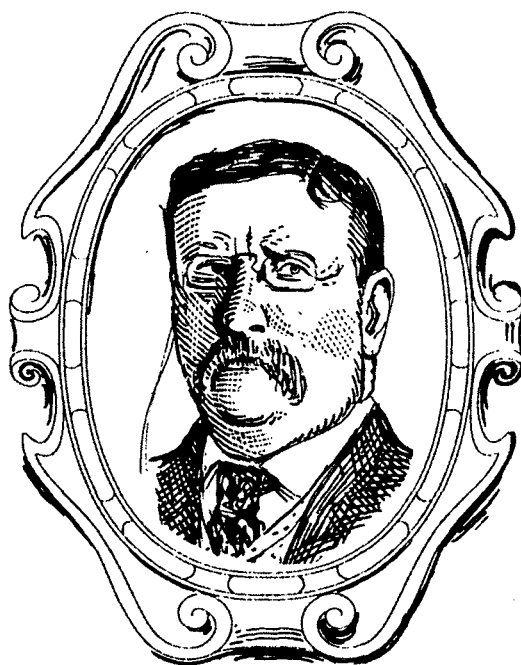
THE 1912 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION showcased four impressive candidates who engaged in a remarkable debate about the future of American politics. Besides William Howard Taft, the incumbent Republican president, the campaign was joined by Eugene Debs, the labor leader from Indiana, who ran on the Socialist Party ticket; the irrepressible Theodore Roosevelt, who bolted from the GOP and ran as the champion of the Progressive Party; and Woodrow Wilson, the Democratic governor of New Jersey, who was elected president. All four candidates acknowledged that fundamental changes were occurring in the American political landscape, and each attempted to define the Progressive Era's answer to the questions raised by the new industrial order that had grown up within the American constitutional system.

That the 1912 election registered, and inspired, fundamental changes in American politics suggests the historical significance of the Progressive Party. Not only was it the driving force of this election, but it remains the most important third party to appear on the American political landscape in the 20th century. With the celebrated former President Roosevelt as its candidate, the most prominent figure of his age, the Bull Moose party won 27.4% of the popular vote and 88 electoral votes from six states. This was extraordinary for a third party. In fact, no third-party candidate for the presidency—before or after 1912—has received so large a percentage of the popular vote or as many electoral votes. More importantly, as a party that embraced and helped legitimize new social movements and candidate-centered campaigns, it pioneered a plebiscitary form of governance that has evolved over the course of the 20th century and appears to have come into its own in recent elections. All these features of the Progressive Party campaign made the election of 1912 look more like that of 2000 than that of 1896.

T.R. and the Bull Moosers

MORE THAN ANY SINGLE LEADER, THE Progressive thinker and editor Herbert Croly wrote, "Theodore Roosevelt contributed decisively to the combination of political and social reform and to the building up a body of national public opinion behind the combination. Under his leadership as president [from 1901-

1908], reform began to assume the characteristics, if not the name, of progressivism." By bestowing national prominence on progressive objectives, T.R.'s presidency ushered in a new form of statesmanship—one that transformed the chief executive into "the steward of the public welfare," giving expression and effect to the American people's aspirations for social improvement. Roosevelt's concept of leadership and his great talent for taking the American people into his confidence made him virtually irresistible to



reformers. "Roosevelt bit me and I went mad," the journalist William Allen White wrote about his participation in the Bull Moose campaign. He was not alone. Jane Addams, the renowned social worker who seconded Roosevelt's Progressive Party nomination for president (the first woman to nominate a major candidate for the presidency), declared that reformers supported T.R.'s candidacy because they viewed him as "one of the few men in public life who has responded to the social appeal, who has caught the significance of the modern movement." He was a leader, she added, "of invincible courage, of open mind, of democratic sympathies, one endowed with power to interpret the common man and to identify himself with the common lot."

Yet as Robert La Follette, one of T.R.'s critics, objected, "No party successfully organized around a man. Principles and issues must

constitute the basis of this great movement." Thus the Progressive Party's political program was especially important in defining its collective mission; these proposals unified the movement and ensured its lasting legacy. Above all, the party stood for "pure democracy," that is, democracy purged of the impure influence of the special interests. The party platform's endorsement of "pure democracy" was sanctified as a "covenant with the people," a deep and abiding pledge to make the people the "masters of their constitution." Like the Populist Party of the late 19th century, the Progressives invoked the Constitution's preamble ("We the People") in proclaiming their purpose to strengthen the federal government's regulatory authority over the society and economy. Unlike the Populists, however, Progressives sought to hitch the will of the people to a strengthened national administrative power. Animated by the radical agrarianism that had accompanied the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian assaults on monopolistic power, the Populists had sought to mobilize the states and the Congress for an assault on the centralizing, plutocratic alliance between the national parties and the large corporations or "trusts." By contrast, the Progressives, with their "gospel of efficiency" drawn from the latest discoveries of political and social science, could not abide the Populists' localized, backward-looking democratic faith.

Today, scholars puzzle over the apparent contradiction between the Progressives' celebration of direct democracy and their hope to achieve more disinterested government, which seemed to demand a powerful and expert national bureaucracy. But Progressives came to see that the expansion of social welfare and "pure democracy," as they understood it, were inextricably linked. Reforms such as the direct primary, as well as the initiative and referendum, were designed to overthrow the localized two-party system in the United States, which for generations had restrained the growth of the national government. By the same token, the triumph of "progressive" over "pioneer" democracy, as Croly framed it, would put the American people directly in touch with the councils of power, thus strengthening their demands for government support and requiring the federal government to expand and transform itself in order to realize the goals of Progressive social welfare policy.

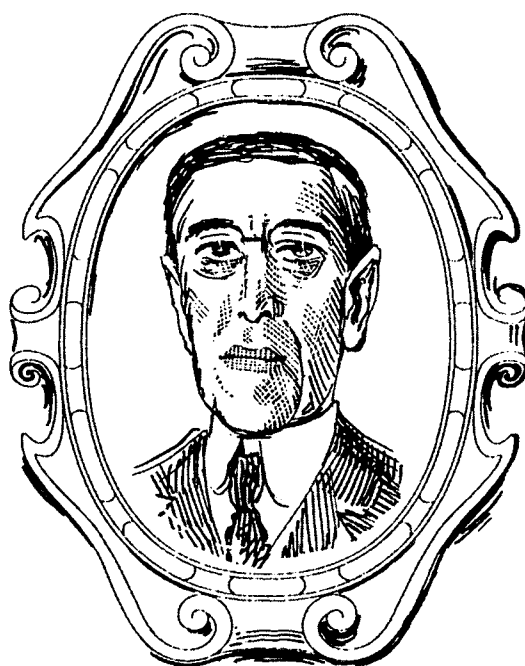
New Nationalism vs. New Freedom

STILL, THE PROFOUND SHIFT IN REGIME norms and practices represented by progressivism did not entail a straightforward evolution from localized to "Big Government." Indeed, the Progressive Party was badly crippled by fundamental disagreements among its supporters over issues that betrayed an acute sensitivity, if not attachment, to the country's commitment to local self-government. The party was deeply divided over civil rights, leading to bitter struggles at the Progressive Party convention over delegate selection rules and the platform that turned on whether the party should confront the shame of Jim Crow. In the end, it did not, accepting the right of the states and localities to resolve the matter of race relations. Moreover, Progressive delegates waged an enervating struggle at the convention over whether an interstate trade commission with considerable administrative discretion or militant antitrust policy was the appropriate method to tame the trusts. New Nationalists, led by Roosevelt, prevailed, pledging the party to regulate, rather than attempt to dismantle, corporate power; however, this disagreement carried over to the general election. The Democratic Party, under the tutelage of their candidate, Woodrow Wilson, and his advisor, Louis Brandeis, embraced a "New Freedom" version of progressivism, which prescribed antitrust measures and state regulations as an alternative to the expansion of national administrative power.

The split between New Nationalism and New Freedom progressives cut to the very core of the modern state that, ostensibly, the programmatic initiatives touted by Progressives anticipated. As Croly acknowledged, the Progressive program presupposed national standards and regulatory powers that "foreshadowed administrative aggrandizement." And yet Progressives could not agree on how administrative power should be used. Indeed, the conflict between New Nationalism and New Freedom Progressives revealed that many reformers shared the profound uneasiness of their Populist forbears about the very prospect of expanding national administrative power. This anxiety was not merely a hastily contrived reaction to the administrative ambitions of New Nationalism; it was allied to a celebration of local self-government that was deeply rooted in American political culture.

Nonetheless, this reluctance to embrace centralized administration did not represent a commitment to local self-government as traditionally understood and practiced. The "compound republic," as James Madison called it, was shaped in the 19th century by party

organizations and legal doctrines that formed a wall of separation between government and society. Progressives of all stripes were committed to breaching that wall. New Freedom progressives wanted to expand the responsibilities of the national government, but hoped to find non-bureaucratic and non-centralized ways to treat the nation's economic ills. They advocated measures like the Sherman Act, enacted in 1890, that would rely on competition and law, rather than administrative tribunals, to curb the abuses of big business. Just as significant, New Freedom progressives hoped to cultivate local forums of public discussion and debate that would "buttress the foundations of democracy." For example, Wilson and Brandeis were active in the "social centers" movement that sought to make use of school buildings for neighborhood forums



on the leading issues of the day.

Still, the Progressive hope of strengthening self-government in the United States depended ultimately on somehow transmuting local self-government into direct rule of the people, who would not have to suffer the interference of decentralizing associations and institutions. Only then could individuals participate in a national movement of public opinion that might cultivate a "more perfect union." "Truly, the voice of the people is the voice of God," wrote a progressive journalist, echoing Andrew Jackson, "but that means the voice of the *whole* people." Although they disagreed about how to reform the economy, Progressives tended to agree on the need for direct democracy. No less than the Wilsonians, New Nationalist reformers championed institutions and practices that would nurture a direct system of popular rule on a national scale. Thus T.R. joined Wilson in calling

for the use of school-houses as neighborhood headquarters for political discussion. Indeed, T.R.'s bolt from the Republican party freed him to make a bolder, more consistent defense of "pure democracy" than Wilson, who, as the nominee of the Democrats, was necessarily more constrained by the structure and organizational practices of the traditional two-party system. In disdaining party politics, and the local self-government it embodied, T.R. gave voice to progressive faith in the American people's aspiration for social justice, and to the responsibility of leaders to give effect to these aspirations. As he stated this creed in his campaign address at Carnegie Hall:

In order to succeed we need leaders of inspired idealism, leaders to whom are granted great visions, who dream greatly and strive to make their dreams come true; who can kindle the people with the fire from their own burning souls. The leader for the time being, whoever he may be, is but an instrument, to be used until broken and then to be cast aside; and if he is worth his salt he will care no more when he is broken than a soldier cares when he is sent where his life is forfeit in order that victory may be won. In the long fight for righteousness the watchword for all of us is, spend and be spent. It is of little matter whether any one man fails or succeeds; but the cause shall not fail, for it is the cause of mankind.

Ostensibly, the "cause" of Progressivism—the platform's commitment to direct democracy and social and industrial justice—gave reform leadership its dignity, indeed its heroic quality. But the celebration of public opinion left leaders at the beck and call of the people. As the influential Wisconsin reformer, Charles McCarthy, warned Roosevelt, the American people were "jealous of losing control" over their political destiny, and four years of Taft had only served to intensify their desire to "have greater control over the presidency." T.R.'s 1912 campaign exalted this desire into a creed. Sensing that "pure democracy" was the glue that held together the movement he sought to lead, Roosevelt made the cause of popular rule the centerpiece of his frantic run for the White House. As Roosevelt said in his "Confession of Faith," delivered at the Progressive Party convention, "the first essential of the Progressive programme is the right of the people to rule." This right demanded more than writing into law measures such as the direct primary, recall, and referendum. It also required rooting firmly in custom the unwritten law that the representatives derived their authority "directly" from the people.

Roosevelt's very appearance at the Progressive Party's convention symbolized a new relationship between leaders and the led. In the past, party nominees had stayed away from the convention, waiting to be notified officially of their nomination. A presidential candidate was expected to demur as a sign of respect for the party's collective purpose. T.R.'s personal appearance at the Progressive convention gave dramatic testimony to his dominance of the proceedings. More significant, it gave evidence of an important historical change, of presidential campaigns being conducted less by parties than by individual candidates who appealed directly for the support of the electorate.

Roosevelt's presence in Chicago, the record of the proceedings tells us, roused the delegates to such an emotional state that they could only be subdued by a reverential singing of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." The delegate's reverence went beyond devotion for their candidate, however; it expressed their collective identity. T.R.'s dominant role in the Progressive Party campaign was not simply a matter of his personal popularity; it followed directly from the Progressive animus against mediating institutions, such as political parties, that discouraged direct contact between reform leaders and the people. Indeed, the reform-minded delegates who came to Chicago championed the direct rule of the people with a fresh enthusiasm that surprised and impressed the journalists who witnessed the proceedings. After observing an evening of reformist speeches, punctuated by the singing of hymns, "which burst forth at the first flash of every demonstration," a reporter for the *San Francisco Examiner* marveled that the convention "was more like a religious revival than a political gathering."

Progressive Democracy and the American Constitution

AS IMPORTANT AND CONTROVERSIAL AS T.R.'s defense of the direct primary was in 1912, it was not the most debated issue of the campaign. Even more controversial was T.R.'s call for the people's right to recall judicial decisions. Aroused by the judiciary's militant defense of property rights, Roosevelt undertook a wholesale attack on its authority. T.R. first announced his support for popular referenda on court rulings in his February 1912 speech in Columbus, Ohio, the same day he finally, in his words, "threw his hat in the ring" as a candidate for president. Specifically, he called for popular referenda to apply only to state courts; but he more than hinted that they should apply to the federal judiciary as well. In fact, the Progressives championed a form of constitutionalism that

would be more immediately responsive to the rule of the people. Roosevelt authored the party plank titled, "Amendment to the Constitution," espousing the party's belief "that a free people should have the power from time to time to amend their fundamental law so as to adapt it progressively to the changing needs of the people." How this was to be done was left open, but the party pledged itself "to provide a more easy and expeditious method of amending the federal constitution."

The Progressive program seemed to challenge the very foundation of republican democracy: the idea, underlying the U.S. Constitution, that space created by institutional devices such as the separation of powers and federalism allowed representatives to govern competently and fairly. Likewise, the Progressive idea of



democracy rejected traditional party politics. Forged on the anvil of Jeffersonian democracy, political parties in the United States were welded to constitutional principles that impeded the expansion of national administrative power. The origins and organizing principles of the American party system established it as a force against the creation of the "modern state." The Progressive reformers' commitment to building such a state—that is, to the creation of a national political power with expansive programmatic responsibilities—meant that the party system either had to be weakened or reconstructed.

In the face of T.R.'s challenge to the prevailing doctrine and practices of representation in the United States, the burden of defending constitutional sobriety fell most heavily on William Howard Taft. In truth, the most important exchange in the constitutional debate of 1912 was the one between T.R. and Taft.

In 1908, of course, Taft had been T.R.'s heir apparent. President Taft had supported and extended the pragmatic progressive program that was the legacy of T.R.'s presidency, working for specific policies such as the Hepburn Act with the cooperation of Republican Party regulars. And yet, Taft now found his own efforts to carry on that pragmatic tradition of reform the object of scorn and derision, the victim of T.R.'s celebration of "pure democracy." "The initiative, the referendum, and the recall, together with a complete adoption of the direct primary as a means of selecting nominees and an entire destruction of the convention system are now all made the *sine qua non* of a real reformer," Taft lamented. "Everyone who hesitates to follow all of these or any of them is regarded with suspicion and is denounced as an enemy of popular government and of the people." Yet his very "hesitation" allowed Taft to find honor in the charge of conservatism leveled against him. Even as T.R.'s defense of direct democracy found great favor throughout the country, Taft resisted this attempt "to tear down all the checks and balances of a well-adjusted, democratic, constitutional, representative government."

To be sure, he agreed that some reform of the national convention system was necessary. And while acknowledging that no political system could avoid the effects of corruption, he urged his fellow Republicans to rise above the patronage politics that had so long dominated party government. In fact, in order to fortify the polity against petty and virulent interest-group politics, Taft emphasized that political parties had the responsibility to endorse and defend fundamental constitutional principles. Accordingly, the Progressive Party's attack on representative institutions called for a new understanding of Republican conservatism, which, Taft argued, should be rooted less in a militant defense of property rights and business than in a Whiggish defense of ordered liberty. "The real usefulness of the Republican Party," he insisted, "consists in its conservative tendencies to preserve our constitutional government and prevent its serious injury."

Taft would thus "stand pat" in defense of the Constitution, which the Progressive idea of democracy threatened to destroy. He warned his fellow Republicans at a 1912 Lincoln Day dinner:

With the effort to make the selection of candidates, the enactment of legislation, and the decision of the courts to depend on the momentary passions of the people necessarily indifferently informed as to the issues presented, and without the opportunity to them for time and study

and that deliberation that gives security and common sense to the government of the people, such extremists would hurry us into a condition which would find no parallel except in the French revolution, or in that bubbling anarchy that once characterized the South American Republics. Such extremists are not progressives—they are political emotionalists or neurotics—who have lost the sense of proportion, that clear and candid consideration of their own weakness as a whole, and that clear perception of the necessity for checks upon hasty popular action which made our people who fought the Revolution and who drafted the Federal Constitution, the greatest self-governing people the world ever knew.

Support for “pure democracy,” Taft charged, found its “mainspring” in the very same “factional spirit” that Madison had warned against in his famous discussion of republican government in *Federalist* No. 10, an unruly majority that would “sacrifice to its ruling passion or interest both the public good and the rights of other citizens.” In resisting this temptation to flatter the whims and passions of the majority, the most sacred duty of true conservatives was to uphold the courts. As Taft told an audience in Boston, T.R.’s defense of direct democracy “sent a thrill of alarm through all the members of the community who understood our constitutional principles and who feared the effect of the proposed changes upon the permanence of government.” It was unthinkable to the great majority of leaders in Congress and the states, and to the great mass of people as well, Taft argued, that Roosevelt should seriously propose to have a plebiscite upon questions involving the construction of the Constitution. T.R.’s audacity drew most clearly the fundamental issue that divided Republicans and Progressives:

The Republican Party...respecting as it does the Constitution...[and] the care with which the judicial clauses of that fundamental instrument were drawn to secure the independence of the judiciary, will never consent to an abatement of that independence to the slightest degree, and will stand with its face like flint against any constitutional changes in it....

Somewhat uncharacteristically, Roosevelt never flinched in the face of this controversy. Sensing that popular rule was the glue that held together the movement he sought to lead, his defense of it became bolder throughout 1912.

Indeed, Roosevelt announced toward the end of September, in a speech at Phoenix, Arizona, that he “would go even further than the Progressive Platform,” applying “the recall to everybody, including the president.” As the *Nation* warned, “T.R. [now stood] upon the bald doctrine of unrestricted majority rule.” Even William Jennings Bryan blushed and admonished T.R. for defending the nationalization of direct democracy. Such measures, the old populist insisted, must be confined to the states.

Despite Taft’s charge that the Progressives threatened to destroy the Constitution, despite the hope of T.R.’s political enemies that such a bold campaign would kill him politically, the Progressive Party campaign of 1912 had an enduring influence on American politics and government. It was not Roosevelt but Taft who suffered a humiliating defeat, winning only two states—Utah and Vermont—and 23% of the popular vote. In contrast, T.R.’s strong showing and his dominant presence in that campaign signaled the beginning of an important change in American democracy.

From its own perspective, the Progressive Party did not seek to destroy the Constitution but to revitalize and democratize it—to renew the debate over issues that had divided the Federalists and Anti-Federalists, as well as the Jeffersonians and Hamiltonians. Indeed, the New Nationalists consciously and deliberately saw themselves as involved in a “neo-Hamiltonian” project. Of course, Progressives defended national public opinion with an enthusiasm that Hamilton would have found very dangerous. But in their celebration of national democracy, Progressives claimed, they were merely following Lincoln, whose legacy was had abandoned by the latter-day Republican Party.

Most importantly, the Progressive faith in public opinion—this popular version of Hamiltonianism—was viewed as a compromise with, and an attempt to calm, the American people’s fear of a centralized state. If national administrative power were to be strengthened and expanded, Progressives acknowledged, the people would have to be in command of it. Support for measures such as the primary, recall, and referendum displayed a willingness on the part of reformers to accommodate those fears, even as they sought to strengthen national administrative power. Jane Addams, who was no less essential than T.R. to Progressive reform objectives, explained this concession to public opinion clearly in a Lincoln Day address. A welfare state could not be created in the United States, she insisted, through the sort of corporatist arrangements that were being formed in Europe and Great Britain; it could not be formed with a centralized Social Democratic party as its agent,

dedicated to building a national state that would link government and society. A welfare state could not gain popular support in the United States, Addams concluded, “unless the power of direct legislation is placed in the hands of the people, in order that these changes may come, not as the centralized government [has] given them, from above down, but may come from the people up; that the people shall be the directing and controlling factors in this legislation.”

To the extent that Progressive democracy was radical, it represented a *sui generis* American form of radicalism—one conceived to rescue American individualism from a blind attachment to the Constitution, especially from fealty to the “high priests” of the Constitution. “[I]t is difficult for Englishmen to understand the extreme conservatism of my proposition as to the referendum to the people of certain judicial questions,” T.R. wrote to a friend abroad; “and this difficulty arises from the fact that in England no human being dreams of permitting the court to decide such questions! In England no court can declare any legislative act unconstitutional.” In fact, T.R. claimed, he sought to avoid the delegation of policy to an unchecked legislature that might truly embody the sort of factionalism that plagued France and England and had worried the architects of the Constitution. Recognizing that factionalism was abetted by militant partisanship in government, he wrote: “I do not propose to make the legislature supreme over the court; I propose *merely* to allow the people...to decide whether to follow the legislature or the court.”

Back to the Future

THE PROGRESSIVE PARTY’S “COMPROMISE” with public opinion in the United States points to its legacy for American politics and government. Arguably, the failure of the 1912 experiment and the Progressive Party’s demise underscore the incoherence of the Progressive movement. Nevertheless, it was neither the Democrats, nor the Republicans, nor the Socialists who set the tone of the 1912 campaign. It was the Progressives. Beyond the 1912 election, their program of political and social reform has been an enduring feature of American political discourse and electoral struggle. The Progressive Party forged a path of reform that left both social democracy and conservatism—Taft’s constitutional sobriety—behind. Similarly, T.R.’s celebrity, and the popularity of the Progressive doctrine of the people’s right to rule, tended to subordinate the more populist to the more plebiscitary schemes in the platform, such as the initiative, the referendum, and the direct primary, which exalted not the “grassroots”

but mass opinion. Indeed, in the wake of the excitement aroused by the Progressive Party, Wilson, whose New Freedom campaign was far more sympathetic to the decentralized state of courts and parties than T.R.'s, felt compelled, as president, to govern as a New Nationalist Progressive.

Of course, the Progressive Party campaign of 1912 is only the beginning of the story—the birth of modern American politics. It fell to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who was inspired by T.R.'s 1912 campaign, to consolidate developments begun by the Progressive Party. Like the Progressive Party, the Democratic Party of the New Deal was formed to advance the personal and nonpartisan responsibility of the executive at the expense of collective and partisan responsibility. Understood within the context of the Progressive tradition, the New Deal is appropriately viewed as the completion of a realignment that would make future partisan realignments unnecessary. It was to be but a way station on the road to Progressive democracy, where, to quote the important Brownlow Committee report: "Our

national will must be expressed not merely in a brief exultant moment of electoral decision, but in persistent, determined, competent day-by-day administration of what the nation has decided to do."

The expansion of national administrative power that followed the New Deal realignment, however, did not result in the kind of state that Progressive reformers had longed for—one enshrining regulation and social welfare policy as expressions of national unity and popular commitment. In truth, the history of the Progressive Party sheds light on the love-hate relationship Americans forged with the state in the 20th century. The 1996 and 2000 presidential elections revealed that middle class entitlements like Social Security and Medicare are still popular. Yet the rejection of national health care reform and the devolution to the states of responsibility for welfare (AFDC) show that Americans continue to abhor, even as they embrace in many important particulars, national administrative power. Meanwhile, "pure democracy" has evolved, or degenerated, into a plebiscitary form of

politics that mocks the Progressive concept of "enlightened administration," and exposes citizens to the sort of public figures who will exploit their impatience with the difficult tasks involved in sustaining a healthy democracy. Those who blame television or campaign finance practices for this development would be well served by a careful study of the deep roots of the Progressive tradition.

For better or worse, the Progressive democracy championed by T.R. in 1912, and the love-hate relationship with the state it has led to, now seem enduring parts of our political life. In this sense, the Progressive Party campaign of 1912 might very well provide useful—and troubling—insights into the future of American politics.

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Book Review by Jean M. Yarbrough

BULLY!

The Selected Letters of Theodore Roosevelt, edited by H.W. Brands.
Cooper Square Press, 656 pages, \$32

Theodore Rex, by Edmund Morris,
Random House, 772 pages, \$35

DURING THE 2000 ELECTION CAMPAIGN, Theodore Roosevelt's stock soared to new heights, as politicians and pundits lauded his strong stand on campaign finance reform, his call for national greatness, and his vigorous use of executive power. Today, America is engaged in a shadowy war on multiple fronts, the economic bubble that fueled the go-go 90s has burst, and every day brings fresh revelations of corporate corruption. Yet, these events have only strengthened the appeal of the old Rough Rider. Can these books help us to understand why? More important, still, can they help us to judge whether the T.R. revival is good for our republican institutions?

When seeking to understand the man, it is useful to begin with his own words, and H.W. Brands, author of *T.R.: The Last Romantic*, has assembled a generous sample of his letters begin-

ning with his boyhood and ending with the death of his son Quentin, in France, during World War I. The only period not adequately represented is the disastrous Bull Moose campaign of 1912. To several correspondents Roosevelt confessed that he did not expect to beat Wilson, but that he felt compelled to run on principle against Taft and the "stand pat" Republicans. Did his closest friends support him in this futile campaign? It's hard to know from this collection. Alas, Professor Brands offers very little by way of editorial commentary; not only does he not explain the criteria for inclusion, but he provides no context and only very occasionally identifies the recipients. A related problem is that the collection includes only letters by Roosevelt, and none to him, with the predictable result that the correspondence takes on something of the character of listening to one side of a telephone con-

versation. But, on the whole, these are quibbles. For nothing better reveals that combination of restless intelligence, boundless moral energy, manly virtue *cum* Victorian sentimentality, and devastating wit—especially when directed at his political enemies—than T.R.'s own muscular prose. To immerse oneself in these letters is to understand exactly what Henry Adams meant when he wrote that Roosevelt displayed "the quality that medieval theology assigned to God—he was pure act."

Paradoxically, for one who preferred doing to thinking, the letters make clear that he was a voracious reader, with self-described "priggish" tastes, who looked for the moral meaning in literature and history. Henry James he dismissed as a "miserable little snob," a former American who amused himself writing "polished, pointless, uninteresting stories about the upper social

classes in England." Chaucer he found enjoyable, but "needlessly filthy." Tolstoy, he declared, oscillated between pacifism and debauchery. T.R. read widely and everywhere. In pursuit of boat thieves in the Dakotas, he took along Matthew Arnold. Hunting big game in Africa, he came belatedly to appreciate the full range of Shakespeare's plays. While president, he read Aristotle's *Politics* and confided to Henry Cabot Lodge that he took "immense comfort" from reading and re-reading Lincoln's speeches.

Asked by Columbia President Nicholas Murray Butler to name the books he has read during his first two years in the White House, Roosevelt rattled off a three-page list that would shame most doctoral students today: parts of Herodotus and Thucydides, a little of Plutarch, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristotle, and Aristophanes. Among modern authors, he had made his way through Bacon, Shakespeare, Carlyle, Macaulay, Scott, Dickens, Stevenson, Tolstoy, and a long string of American novelists and poets.

Yet none of this reading got in the way of his prodigious doing. In another letter (which seems to fit Alice Roosevelt's definition of a "posterity letter") written in the same year (1903) to Lyman Abbott, editor of *Outlook* magazine, Roosevelt identified six affirmative steps that he took as president with respect to the relations between labor and capital. He established the power of the government to regulate the trusts by successfully bringing suit against the Northern Securities holding company; set up a Bureau of Corporations to regulate and supervise corporations engaged in interstate commerce; signed a law banning railroad rebates; summoned together coal operators and miners to settle a coal strike that was threatening the public welfare; established an open shop policy for government workers; and finally, sent troops to restore order when a miners' strike out West turned violent.

A constant theme of this and numerous other letters is the need to strike a balance between the conflicting claims of the wealthy few and the many laboring poor, while at the same time reining in the respective vices of each class, viz., the arrogant presumption of the rich that they are above the law and the equally dangerous resentment and envy of those at the bottom of the social order. Unlike others of his class, Roosevelt possessed the true aristocrat's contempt for "the huge monied men to whom money is the be-all and the end-all of existence," and, at least through his first administration, an equal disdain for the demagogue. He regarded it as a sign of his moderation that he found himself attacked by both sides. But was he right? This is a question that Roosevelt's letters do not answer.

ROOSEVELT STRUCK UP A LIFELONG friendship with Henry Cabot Lodge soon after graduating from Harvard, while working on the 1884 presidential campaign. Brands includes numerous letters to Lodge, but their correspondence is not the most revealing, partly because, for most of their political careers, the two were in close accord. Far more illuminating are the lengthy letters he penned to foreigners, mostly sympathetic Englishmen, like Cecil Spring Rice, Arthur H. Lee, and George Otto Trevelyan. In a series of letters to them, Roosevelt laid out his strategic vision for America and displayed impressive foresight in sizing up the territorial ambitions of her foreign rivals, especially Germany and Japan. At least in the beginning he was less perceptive about Russia, though he quickly got that looming danger in focus. The letters to Spring Rice also explored "the great racial questions," especially as they bore on the Japanese and on American immigration.

The correspondence also includes a number of letters on race relations between American blacks and whites, touching on the "lily white" electoral strategy of the Republican Party in the South, the fallout from T.R.'s White House dinner with Booker T. Washington, a savage lynching in Delaware, and Brownsville. A letter to Owen ("Dan") Wister criticizes his novel *Lady Baltimore* for siding too much with the South, though when it comes to the Negroes, Roosevelt "entirely" agrees with Wister that as a race they are "altogether inferior to the whites."

Readers interested in the theoretical basis of Roosevelt's progressivism will find his letter to Hugo Munsterberg in 1916 suggestive:

I do not for one moment believe that the Americanism of today should be a mere submission to the American ideals of the period of the Declaration of Independence. Such action would be not only to stand still, but to go back. American democracy, of course, must mean an opportunity for everyone to contribute his own ideas to the working out of the future. But I will go further than you have done. I have actively fought in favor of grafting on our social life, no less than our industrial life, many of the German ideals.

One is naturally led to wonder what Roosevelt, an accomplished amateur historian and man of letters in his own right, would have made of Edmund Morris's long-awaited study of Roosevelt's presidential years. A letter to the British historian George Trevelyan in the midst of T.R.'s presidency may provide some clue. There, he decried the growth of scientific history, which

marshals fact upon fact, without any overarching theme. Roosevelt dismissed the current crop of historians as day-laborers, respectable enough for the work they do, but mischievous and absurd when they begin to think that their work renders the architect unnecessary. Great histories must not only be well-written and interesting but show judgment and thought.

Morris, whose biography of the young T.R., *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (1979), was widely celebrated, is not a scientific historian but neither does he display much judgment and thought, especially when it comes to politics. Political topics tend to baffle, then bore, him. Indeed, in *Dutch*, his fictionalized biography of Ronald Reagan, Morris chose to write himself into the story just to keep up his interest. At any rate, in *Theodore Rex*, he sticks to the facts, piles and piles of them (some more dubious than others: are Slavs "swarthy"? are conservatives "coldly polite to their butlers"? what is a "fat Teutonic neck"?), but offers no comprehensive or even coherent reflection on this, the first modern activist presidency of the 20th century. To be sure, in 555 pages of narrative Morris covers the great domestic and foreign policy issues, but he does so in a style that is vastly annoying, with quick cuts from one incident to another, sometimes as many as two or three on a page, so that the thread of the story gets lost in the dizzying motion.

Morris seems much more intent with setting a mood than he does with analyzing the thought and actions of his subject. And on certain topics, his comments are confused and misleading. Take the idea of social Darwinism, which held an entire generation of Americans, including the early T.R., in its grip. Morris does not seem to be clear on the differences between social Darwinism and Lamarckian evolutionary theory, let alone the significance of these developments for American political life.

EVEN MORE FUNDAMENTALLY, MORRIS FAILS to address the significance of Roosevelt's presidency. From his correspondence, it seems that Roosevelt understood his actions as an effort to strike a mean between the competing claims of the rich and the poor. At various points in the narrative, Morris himself seems to subscribe to this view. He tells us, for instance, that all his life T.R. was obsessed with balance. Yet finding the mean would seem to be the work of a mature statesman, so how does Morris square this account with Cecil Spring Rice's comment that Roosevelt was really about six-years-old, or Morris's own judgment that Roosevelt was morally inflexible when it came to his decisions on Panama and Brownsville? More generally, in what sense does the search for balance explain T.R.'s growing radicalization

during his second term? Does Morris believe that T.R. in 1907 is still trying to achieve some kind of balance? If so, how does he explain Roosevelt's increasing reliance on "Constitution-defying executive orders" to push through policies that Congress opposed? Does he believe that T.R. arrogated power to himself in defiance of the Constitution in order to impose his own view of balance on the social classes?

Or does he, as seems more likely, quietly abandon the notion of balance as an explanatory principle? Such would seem to be the case in his chapter entitled "Moral Overstrain," where Morris describes Roosevelt's overheated Special Message to Congress in January 1908

as one "radical enough to excite the admiration of Upton Sinclair." Then there is Roosevelt's last Annual Message in December 1909, which Morris characterizes as "so imperious a call for enhanced executive authority that it amounted to a condemnation of the doctrine of checks and balances." (Curiously, for a study of T.R.'s presidential years, Morris never once mentions T.R.'s "stewardship" theory of executive power, let alone reflect on what it means for constitutional government.)

Morris recounts all this, and more, but leaves us at a loss for what to make of it. When, infrequently, he does venture an interpretation, as he does in praising Roosevelt's "deep and brilliant

perception that justice is not a matter of eternal verities, but of constant case-by-case adaptation to the human prejudices of the judges," he not only distorts Roosevelt's own words (the social philosophy of the judges does not necessarily reduce to mere prejudice) but he reveals his own shallow understanding of politics. Readers seeking an intelligent analysis of T.R.'s presidency and its effect on our republican institutions will have to look elsewhere.

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Book Review by Ronald J. Pestritto

READING WOODROW WILSON

Constitutional Government in the United States, by Woodrow Wilson.
Introduction by Sidney A. Pearson, Jr. Transaction Publishers, 236 pages, \$29.95

GIVEN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROGRESSIVE movement to the direction of American politics in the 20th century, it is surprising that very little of the Progressives' main political writings are available in print. Indeed, those of us who teach them are often forced to rely on distributing large photocopied collections of their out-of-print works. This is why the new reprint (in paperback) of Woodrow Wilson's *Constitutional Government in the United States* is such a welcome development. Published by Transaction, with a new introduction by Sidney A. Pearson, Jr., *Constitutional Government* allows readers access to the constitutional thinking of one of Progressivism's most important figures.

The book began life as a series of lectures at Columbia University in 1907, which Wilson was happy to deliver. He was then the president of Princeton University and in the thick of bitter campus controversy. Published in 1908, *Constitutional Government* would be his final book as what he called a "literary politician." Two years later, he would be elected governor of New Jersey; two years after that, President of the United States. These lectures are the best guide to the political science he brought with him to the White House.

For Wilson, although the Constitution had been appropriate for the founding era, it needed now to be adapted to the demands of a new age. The problem was that the old constitutional order was standing in the way of progress. Its fixed, highly individualistic view of rights didn't square with the realities of an interdependent, industrialized economy. And its checks-and-balances-ridden institutions could not accommodate the new programs and agencies needed to solve the country's multiplying social problems. America had to shift, Wilson concluded, from a limited to a living constitution. It had to move from a "Newtonian" to a "Darwinian" understanding of politics. It had to replace government according to the Constitution with what he termed "constitutional government."

Based upon his general objection to the founders' understanding of government, Wilson proposed a series of "reforms" designed to undermine the separation of powers system at the heart of limited government. Among these were new theories of presidential leadership and party government, as well as a new-fangled separation of politics and administration.

Such fundamental changes in American constitutionalism are registered nicely in Pearson's

introduction to the new edition of *Constitutional Government*. His essay is well worth reading as a refreshing alternative to much of the standard scholarship on Wilson. Contrary to those who are taken in by Wilson's claim that he is merely adapting the arguments of the founders to a new generation, Pearson, a political scientist at Radford University, appreciates the radical nature of Wilson's argument. He rightly sees in Wilson "the foundation of the modern Liberal critique of the political science of the founders." Pearson also explains how Wilson's evolutionary interpretation of the Constitution had its roots in German idealism and historicism. In short, Pearson goes well beyond those interpreters who see the primary influence on Wilson as Walter Bagehot and other writers in the English Historical School. This edition of *Constitutional Government* therefore performs the dual service of returning to print a vital source of modern liberal thought in America, and providing a concise interpretation of Wilson's role in the American tradition.

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Book Review by John Marini

OUR ENEMY, THE STATE?

The Sixteen-Trillion Dollar Mistake, by Bruce S. Jansson.

Columbia University Press, 496 pages, \$29

Dependent On D.C.: The Rise of Federal Control Over the Lives of Ordinary Americans,

by Charlotte A. Twight. Palgrave, 512 pages, \$26.95

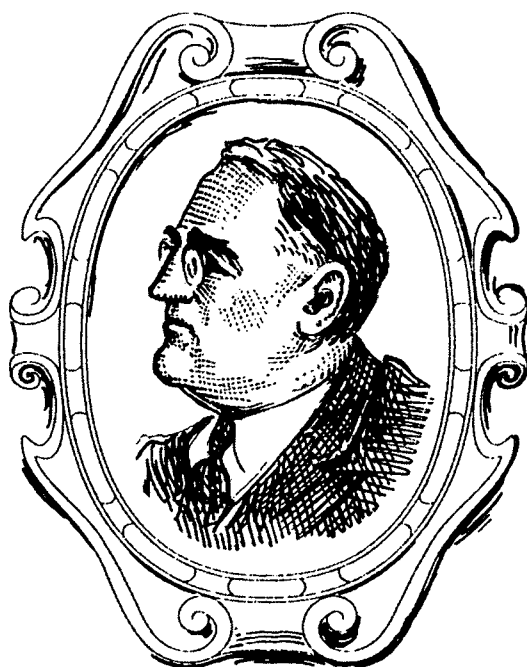
IN ATTEMPTING TO ANALYZE THESE TWO books, it is helpful to consider the political and theoretical assumptions on which they are based. Bruce S. Jansson, a professor of social policy at the University of Southern California and author of *The Reluctant Welfare State* (1996), accepts, absolutely and uncritically, the progressive belief in the rational state. He is convinced that government is the solution to our economic, social, and political problems. On the other hand, Charlotte A. Twight, an economics professor at Boise State University in Idaho and author of *America's Emerging Fascist Economy* (1975), is quite certain that government is the problem, and threatens to become a tyranny.

In attempting to grasp the differences in the intellectual perspectives of the authors, it is further helpful to contrast the two public men, Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan, who gave political expression to these opposing viewpoints. It is safe to say that FDR transformed progressive, or historicist, thought into a successful political movement, which in principle mandated a public solution to every human problem. Reagan, however, in his memorable First Inaugural Address, insisted that government itself had become a problem, because it had ceased to be limited government, one in which the people themselves are primarily responsible for solving their own problems. Reagan raised a question of principle concerning the power, scope, and purpose of the national government in American life.

In posing the problem as he did, Reagan struck a responsive chord with the electorate. But he engendered the undying hostility of the defenders of the rational, or social welfare, state—the political legacy of FDR. Reagan seemed to deny that their conception of government, derived from the German or, more precisely, the Hegelian idea of the state, is fundamentally just, much less inevitable. His criticism was made on behalf of the people, and it was meant to force nothing less than a reappraisal of the meaning of the American social contract.

By the end of the 19th century, progressive intellectuals had accepted the view that history, not nature, provided the ground of meaningful knowledge. Moreover, they had targeted the economy as the driving force of history. By urging the expansion of government's role in the

economy and society, they facilitated the transformation of the regime from a constitutional or limited government into a modern administrative state, in which the power of government cannot be limited because the social problems it will be called on to solve are unlimited. So understood, government is an ethical organization, an engine of compassion, which establishes a common ground of freedom by progressively



redefining and securing human rights, now synonymous with social needs. Men will be free only when they are no longer "necessitous," as FDR liked to say.

In Roosevelt's view, individual freedom had brought about the catastrophe of the Depression. He believed that selfish behavior on the part of individuals and corporations had to give way to rational social action informed by a benevolent government. Consequently, the role of government would no longer be merely the protection of the natural, or political, rights of individuals. The old social compact, which limited the power of government to certain purposes and thus established the ground of an autonomous civil society and a free economy, no longer worked, according to Roosevelt. Those old restrictions had made sense when governmental tyranny was the problem; but that problem had been licked. The new problem was economic tyranny, the hidden

or informal power of the "economic royalists"; and against that danger, countervailing governmental power was the solution.

Big Government not only protected the people's liberties, however. It was also the source of their liberties. In Roosevelt's creative reinterpretation of the social compact, spelled out in his 1932 Commonwealth Club address, he noted that "under such a contract, rulers were accorded power, and the people consented to that power on consideration that they be accorded certain rights. The task of statesmanship has always been the redefinition of these rights in terms of a changing and growing social order." Rights come from the rulers, in other words, and they are accorded to the collectivity, to the people. Individual rights properly so called, grounded in nature and nature's God, do not exist. All rights are therefore entitlements promised by the government to the people, and all rights are based on social claims or needs recognized by government.

Roosevelt provided a new understanding of the meaning of freedom, rooted not in human nature but in the historical development of the social compact between the rulers and the ruled. To this process the economy is the key, inasmuch as it supplies the necessities upon which freedom depends. Thus Roosevelt could argue, "in our day these economic truths have been accepted as self-evident. We have accepted, so to speak, a second Bill of Rights under which a new basis of security and prosperity can be established for all...."

RONALD REAGAN, BY CONTRAST, IMPLICITLY rejected FDR's new account of the social compact. In his First Inaugural Address, Reagan insisted, "we are a nation that has a government—not the other way around. And this makes us special among the nations of the Earth. Our government has no power except that granted it by the people. ...If we look to the answer as to why for so many years we achieved so much, prospered as no other people on Earth, it was because here in this land we unleashed the energy and individual genius of man to a greater extent than has ever been done before. Freedom and the dignity of the individual have been more available and assured here than in any other

place on Earth." Reagan contended that government becomes a problem when it loses faith in the people. He noted, "It's not my intention to do away with government. It is rather to make it work—work with us, not over us; to stand by our side, not ride our back. Government can and must provide opportunity, not smother it; foster productivity, not stifle it."

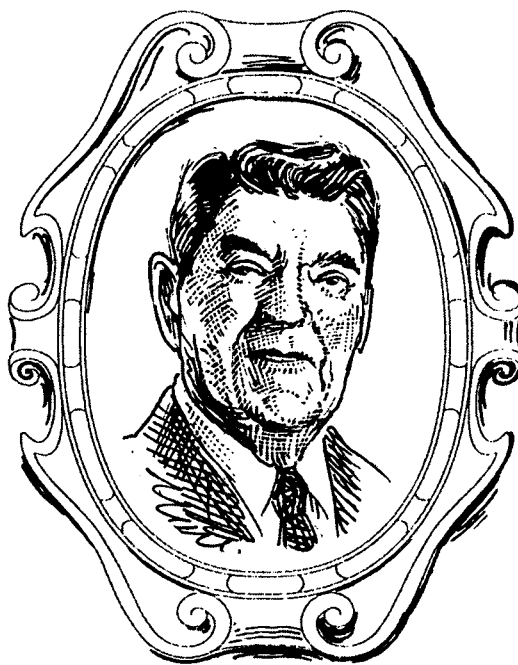
In Reagan's view, it was this lack of trust in the people that posed the greatest danger to free government. The capacity of the people to govern themselves was dependent upon their ability to conduct their own affairs. The intellectual and governing classes had assumed for too long that only the rational, administrative state—the knowledge elite—could manage the affairs of a modern nation. "We've been tempted to believe that society has become too complex to be managed by self-rule," Reagan noted, "that government by an elite group is superior to government for, by, and of the people. Well, if no one among us is capable of governing himself, then who among us has the capacity to govern someone else?" Reagan succeeded in mobilizing a powerful sentiment against the perceived excesses of Big Government. In doing so, he revived the debate over limited government. In his last State of the Union message, he noted that the "most exciting revolution ever known to humankind began with three simple words: 'We the People,' the revolutionary notion that the people grant government its rights, and not the other way around."

The gulf between the philosophical assumptions of Roosevelt and Reagan virtually precludes the possibility of a dialogue, as the books under review make clear. The quarrels between the defenders and opponents of the modern state have attained the status of religious disputation. It's not surprising, therefore, that the authors of these books are in complete disagreement about whether government is the problem, or the solution to our problems. Furthermore, they disagree over the meaning of freedom and its importance. They cannot even agree on what constitutes a tyranny.

Bruce Jansson, like Roosevelt, believes that the state is an ethical organization. For him, the government of a modern democratic state simply could not become a tyranny. Charlotte Twilight is persuaded that the federal government is systematically establishing a tyranny through its power to regulate and control the economy and society. In her view, government is the problem because it has usurped power that should reside in the people. She avers, "the shift from personal au-

tonomy to dependence on government is perhaps the defining characteristic of modern American politics. In the span of barely one lifetime, a nation grounded in ideals of individual liberty has been transformed into one in which federal decisions control even such personal matters as what health care we can buy—a nation now so bound up in detailed laws and regulation that no one can know what all the rules are, let alone comply with them."

Twilight documents in great detail the "evolution of federal power over fundamental aspects of our lives—our education, our income, our retirement security, our health care, our privacy." Perhaps most important is her trenchant argument that greater dependency has not only made us less free but also less secure. She shows that the growth of the administrative state has undermined the rule of law, which makes precarious the exercise



of every right. "[A] vast web of legal rules now enmeshes Americans in a tangle of law so complex, so contradictory, so uncertain, that most of us can no longer either understand or comply with it," she notes. "As federal laws overseeing nearly every aspect of human conduct increasingly invite selective enforcement and discretionary interpretation, businesses routinely channel financial support to both major political parties in hopes of buying protection." Ironically, then, "today's profusion of statutory laws and administrative regulations insures that Americans now are ruled by the arbitrary power of men, not by knowable law."

Jansson assumes that only the state can establish the conditions of social justice. It is not surprising that such justice demands nothing less

than the equitable redistribution of wealth, presupposing nearly absolute governmental control of the economy. Every argument, every fact, is subordinate to his fundamental assumption, that only government can act in an ethical manner. Consequently, when he is critical of government it is because it has not used its taxing power in a socially responsible way. "Wasted resources," he argues, "diminish attempts to build a just society by taking resources from the people who most need them and placing these assets in the hands of military contractors, the affluent, special interests, and corporations." In short, he contends that "the pattern of waste institutionalized since the 1930's"—\$16 trillion worth, he estimates—"has harmed millions of people by depriving them of child care, education, housing, adequate public transportation, clean environments, and other basic amenities—deprivations that are likely to continue if the government continues to waste resources at an equivalent pace." Like Roosevelt, Jansson subordinates everything, including individual freedom, to his view of social justice as enforced by the state.

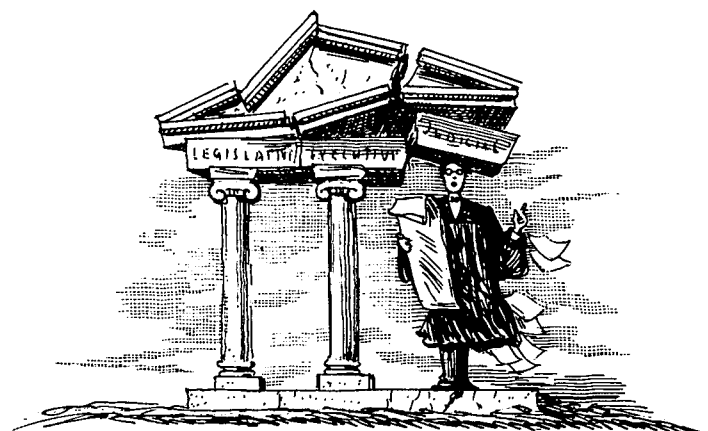
LIKE REAGAN, TWIGHT UNDERSTANDS FREEDOM in opposition to dependency upon government. She insists, "if we are to hope for a future blessed with civil liberty, private property rights, free markets, and personal autonomy, it is imperative that we understand what has happened, and how it has happened." Her book shows how the Progressives worked diligently to expand the modern state's power and legitimacy. For that reason, she notes, "generations of young people have been systematically stripped of the intellectual tools that would enable them to defend the institutions crafted by the Framers of our Constitution." Nor is she sanguine about the possibility of reversing the growing dependency upon government. But in this bracing and important book, she refuses to despair. "We have underestimated," she concludes, "the talent and tenacity of those who seek to make dependents of us all. If liberty is to grow again in America, we must, like those who signed the Declaration of Independence, choose to commit 'our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor' to that noble effort."

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Book Review by Richard E. Morgan

COURTING THE NEW DEAL

The Constitution and the New Deal, by G. Edward White.
Harvard University Press, 385 pages, \$48.95



G EDWARD WHITE, LEGAL HISTORIAN of the University of Virginia, has presented us with a fine book on one of the most important issues in contemporary constitutional studies—how properly to assess the significance of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal for the development of American constitutional law. The conventional wisdom is that the clash between the Supreme Court and the New Deal in the mid-1930s, culminating in the "Court Packing Plan" and the "Constitutional Revolution of 1937," both transformed American constitutional law almost overnight and resulted in substantive changes in American constitutional understandings which are to be regarded as permanent and unarguably desirable. White debunks this as "myth." As he puts it, the New Deal's "expansion of the regulatory and redistributive powers of government have [sic] been taken by [most] scholars as both historically inevitable and normatively unproblematic." These beliefs, articles of faith for several generations of lawyer-scholars and historians, are mistaken, and White's book does the best job thus far of explaining why.

White's review of the conventional New Deal narrative, and of the power it continues to exert over the imagination of academic students of the United States Constitution, is masterly. The conventional narrative is revealed as starkly "realist," dismissing the significance of evolving legal doctrine and jurisprudential concepts and seeing judges as "dependent variables" driven by the necessitating political forces of the day. In this sense, the established narrative fits comfortably with the crudely behaviorist assumptions of post-war American social science; it ascribes change in constitutional law to factors external to the judiciary—to political pressure, principally in the form of the presidential election of 1936 and

the Court Packing Plan. In fact, the great shift in our constitutional understandings was not sudden but gradual, and it had little to do with immediate political pressures and everything to do with fundamental change in the realm of ideas—ideas about the nature of law and the judicial role in applying it.

By contrast, revisionist accounts (typified by Barry Cushman's 1998 *Rethinking the New Deal*) are "internalist," stressing precisely the extent to which change in American constitutional law resulted from changing ideas among America's legal elites, a process that began early in the twentieth century. Revisionists argue that the orthodox New Dealers are insufficiently attentive to early 20th-century case law and jurisprudential currents of change. In fact, White insists that the orthodox have mischaracterized and misrepresented American constitutional history in the three decades preceding the New Deal precisely in order to preserve the myth of the "Constitutional Revolution" as a moment of sudden and defining change. Furthermore, revisionists such as White resist a constitutional theology in which the core elements of New Deal constitutionalism—its disdain for property rights, for federalism, for separation of powers, and its embrace of social improvement through agencies of an expanded national government—are to be accepted as permanent, ordinal aspects of the American constitutional order.

White concludes his critical review of the conventional wisdom with a treatment of three prominent scholars who, he argues, seek to vindicate the centrality of the New Deal to 20th-century American constitutionalism while acknowledging and even seeking to incorporate (and thereby neutralize) some elements of the revisionist critique. He examines the work of

Cass Sunstein, Bruce Ackerman, and Laura Kalman, finding Kalman the most credible of the three, but concluding that their project fails for essentially the same reason that the more naïve New Deal orthodoxy fails, because it is historically insensitive, and uncritically accepting of the rightness and permanence of core New Deal constitutional doctrines.

Then, in a series of chapters treating executive power in foreign relations, the emergence of "agency government," the growth of administrative law, and free speech jurisprudence, White advances his own highly intelligent and historically nuanced version of the revisionist argument. For him, the transformation of our constitutional law started well before the Constitutional Revolution. New Deal constitutionalism is an *example* of the working out by the Supreme Court of the modern paradigm of constitutional interpretation which had been gaining ground for decades before 1937. He describes the change as one from "guardian review," to "bifurcated review." This involved a shift in the way judges regarded the job of constitutional interpretation. Guardian review, the traditional approach reflected in John Marshall's opinion in *Marbury v. Madison*, "presupposed that the essentialist principles of the Constitution reinforced preordained barriers between public power and private rights and between [the nation] and the states, and that judges would function as interpretive policers of these boundaries...." By "essentialist," White means the idea that there are durable, comprehensible legal principles embodied in the Constitution that judges can apply, such as boundaries between state and national power, between the branches of the central government, and between the individual and the demands of the government of the day. The rise of Progressivism, and

the emergence of its associated "living constitution" persuasion early in the last century, began to undercut the "essentialism" in constitutional thought that was the intellectual foundation of guardian review, just as higher intellectual fashions of the time (think of the rise of Pragmatism) were undercutting the idea of conceptual foundations generally. In "living constitution" jurisprudence "there was no meaningful separation of the authority of constitutional principles from the authority of those holding the power to say what these principles meant in cases before the Supreme Court...."

For White, this simply marks the arrival in legal thought of intellectual modernity, and the hallmark of this modernity or "modernism" is historicism—the view that all human thought is essentially contextual and contingent, that there are no preexisting principles or boundaries to observe. On this view, the best the judge can do is to try to figure out what makes sense in the historical context in which he must act. Late 18th and 19th century Americans, White notes, assumed the existence of "distinctive conceptions on the course of ideas and institutions over time and across space" (that old, bad, "essentialism"). This tradition was "premodern" and "prehistoricist"; it made guardian review a coherent enterprise, but once intellectual modernity sweeps notions of durable principles from the table and replaces them with the new view that there is no distinction between the interpreter and the text being interpreted, guardian review must sink like a stone. Here White is both describing what happened and, at least by implication, affirming its inevitability; the notion of essential principles of law simply could not survive the arrival of "modernism." It was this slow change in the intellectual underpinnings of legal thought that liberated judges from the tyranny of conventional legal materials—texts, history, and precedent. It was not the New Deal.

WHY DOES WHITE CALL THE NEWLY ASCENDANT regime one of "bifurcated review"? Because once it is accepted that judges are simply problem solvers, essentially no different from legislators, the question becomes how to overcome the famous "counter-majoritarian difficulty." Why should judges be able to invoke the Constitution at all against legislators and elected executives if they are in fact creating the policies themselves unguided by any binding constitutional principles? The answer is that the judges should only do so when their intervention will advance or enhance "democracy." Thus in cases involving economic and social regulations the judges will properly defer to legislative choices because this enhances democracy—as in the Court's abdica-

tion, in *U.S. v. Darby* (1941) and *Wickard v. Filburn* (1942), of its traditional role of enforcing commerce clause limitations on the powers of Congress. This is the permissive, deferential lens in the new bifocals; the other, activist lens, comes into play when cases involving civil liberties and political participation come before the Court. Here, on the theory of the famous "Footnote Four" in the *Carolene Products* case, the Court will strictly scrutinize the choice made by a legislative or executive policy maker. But this activism is not justified by any appeal to pre-historicist notions of "essentials" or preexisting constitutional boundaries. It is justified because giving individuals more rights enhances democracy. For the judges to intervene and substitute their policy judgments for those of elected policymakers would frustrate democracy in the economic and social context, but where civil rights and liberties are concerned, judicial policymaking may advance democracy by frustrating the tyranny of the majority. Once again, White is both describing and, it appears, endorsing.

White's approach elegantly accounts for the disaster that overtook American constitutional law in the 20th century. He's got it in considerably better focus than anyone else. His emphasis on long-term currents of intellectual change rather than on the crude externalism and behavioralism of a "switch in time that saved nine," is surely right. And White is unflinching in spelling out the implications of the modern, historicist orthodoxy for the doctrinal substance of New Deal constitutionalism, i.e., that it can make no more claim to permanence than what preceded it: "...post-New Deal essentialism in constitutional jurisprudence is still essentialism." There can be no such privileging of any concept or principle; the concern for modern judges must be for what advances "democracy" in particular contexts.

In the end, however, I am left with a quibble and a question. The quibble has to do with White's choice of the term "modernism" to describe the intellectual disposition that drove change in American constitutional law. What he is accurately describing is what most of us would call *postmodernism*. The embrace of historicism and the denial of a distinction between text and interpreter are dead giveaways. Of course, neither the Progressives of the first decades of the last century, nor the legal realists of the '20s and '30s, had the term "postmodern," but White makes abundantly clear this is what they were up to. Progressive Republican (and future Chief Justice of the United States) Charles Evans Hughes famously quipped that "we live under a constitution, but the Constitution is what the judges say it is"—giving us a textbook example of the early impact of "pomo" on American constitutional thought.

My question is more serious, and it is one that White rather demurely avoids. Is an essentially postmodern style of constitutional interpretation, which rejects the idea of durable legal principles, compatible with the institution of judicial review based on a written constitution? Even more fundamentally, is an intellectual process that obliterates the distinction between principles and those "holding the power to say what these principles mean," a recognizably legal form of decision-making at all? Put another way, if texts are denied independent, binding meaning (whether they be constitutions, statutes, or contracts) and "interpreters" are seen as just folks attempting to respond by their best lights to the exigencies of particular situations, where does their authority to deploy the coercive power of government against the rest of us come from?

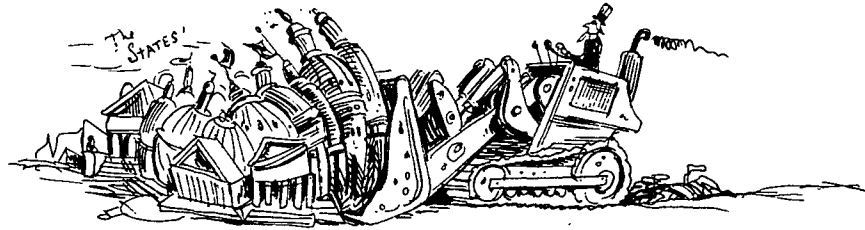
Surely it is not enough to answer that under the regime of "bifurcated review" courts conduct themselves in democracy-enhancing ways, and that this justifies their power. There are different views in our society of what is democracy-enhancing and what isn't; such issues are typically contested. If the question is whether banning certain "issue advertisements" in advance of an election is democracy-advancing or democracy-retarding, this is one on which Americans are deeply divided and it is hard to see how the judges, should they attempt to resolve this on the basis of what democracy "really" requires, have any particular claim to authority. Indeed, if they're just specialized legislators in robes, it is difficult to see why they should not be firmly reined in whenever they oppose the majority of the day on any issue—heavens! the dreaded business of "court curbing." And was it really inevitable that an intellectual disposition, postmodernism, which in the early years of a new century is increasingly perceived as wrong-headed and even comic, would have so devastating an effect on the American legal mind? (Deconstructionist English departments are now laughing-stocks, and it is hard to believe many people take Stanley Fish seriously anymore).

All this, however, may be to criticize White for writing his book rather than mine. He might well reply that the question of legitimacy in constitutional law is a hotly debated one today and can be left to others. His chosen task was to describe how we got to where we are, and to dispel the powerful, simplistic New Deal myth that obscures our actual constitutional history. Fair enough. But by doing such a good job in tracing how we got where we are he has rendered the legitimacy issue even more clamant.

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PUTTING THE FIGHT BACK IN FEDERALISM

The Implosion of American Federalism, by Robert F. Nagel.
Oxford University Press, 209 pages, \$29.95



ROBERT NAGEL IS A WORRIER. UNLIKE most constitutional lawyers, he knows what is worth worrying about: the future of responsible self-government in the United States. For Nagel, who teaches law at the University of Colorado, federalism is endangered by an “eclipse of state institutions” and of the messy but salutary political culture that once sustained them. The Supreme Court, he argues, has become the vortex where the “individualism, impatience, and perfectionism [once] associated with the American frontier” result in illusory legal certainties, the radical isolation of individual citizens, the debasement of political debate, and the withering away of meaningful local communities.

Readers of Nagel’s previous books (*Constitutional Cultures* and *Judicial Power and American Character*) will once again be drawn into his compulsively readable, densely packed arguments about the consequences of American reliance on the Court as “a churchlike arbiter of moral truths.” First-time readers may be surprised to discover that Nagel devotes only about half of this book to the Supreme Court’s recent “federalism” decisions, which have raised such alarms in the law reviews. He makes a strong case that the Court has not been—and cannot be expected to be—a defender of the “robust federalism” of the founding, but instead “is likely to provide us with only a domesticated version of federalism,” because its deepest commitment is to the augmentation of its own power. For Nagel, there is little hope that recent rulings on commerce, state sovereign immunity, or the “commandeering” of state governments by national laws are harbingers of a truly revived political conversation across the boundaries of federalism. This is so because “natural inclinations of the judicial mind” place the justices “at war with federalism to the extent that federalism exists so that disagreement can be registered and national authority questioned.”

In the book’s latter half, Nagel applies his claim about the Court’s inclination to brook no disagreement, in brilliant chapters on the impli-

cations of judicial supremacy; the development of the so-called “privacy” principle into an engine that simultaneously nationalizes and radically individualizes the most serious moral decisions; the emergence of increasingly shrill and personalized discourse at the national level while “political dialogue at the state level [becomes] bland, insubstantial, derivative, and unserious”; and the taste for highly abstract legalisms (memorably labeled the “Yale Argument”) that become substantially indistinguishable from lies about ourselves and our country. Even the mendacity of an impeached Bill Clinton gets the Nagel treatment, illustrating the ways in which “lying is magical and liberating” in our degraded political culture.

THE TROUBLE WITH THE DISCUSSION OF the “federalism” cases of recent years is that, while Nagel is highly critical of the Court’s comprehensive purposes, he seems to cling to a certain sympathy for the reasoning of the “federalist” justices in *National League of Cities v. Usery* (1976), *U.S. v. Lopez* (1995), and other cases. Nagel admits that “what is missing” from most if not all of these opinions is “an appreciation for the role of conflict in our constitutional system.” And he is deeply critical of the Court’s “cherished [and self-proclaimed] role as the ultimate expositor of the Constitution.” But he cannot quite grasp the nettle and say outright that the Supreme Court had no business, as a matter of constitutional principle, intervening authoritatively on behalf of the states in any of these cases. Nothing less than a complete judicial retreat from the “defense of federalism” where Congress has crafted a national policy through the use of its enumerated or implied powers is consistent, in my view, with the framers’ separation of powers, or with the course of our whole constitutional jurisprudence prior to the *Dred Scott* case. But I can’t help suspecting that Nagel would be happy to see the justices “get it right” on the subject of federalism, rather than leave it alone as they should.

One of the most interesting but least developed parts of his argument is his turn to the notion of interposition, by which he means nothing that smacks of Calhounian nullification, but merely “interposition for communicative and organizational purposes,” aimed at “persuad[ing] the public that the ‘people in the states’ do have a legitimate role in enforcing constitutional limits.” How this would work in practice so long as Congress remains a centralizing force in our politics is left somewhat mysterious. But perhaps the answer lies in the much better second half of the book, in which Nagel decries the deleterious effect of the Supreme Court’s “individual rights” jurisprudence on the mechanisms, and the ethos, of constitutional self-government at the state and local level.

Perhaps the precondition for a revival of robust federalism is the rollback of the Supreme Court’s moralistic libertarianism on abortion, pornography, “gay rights,” religion, criminal justice, school integration, and a host of other matters. Were the people of the states to be readmitted to the American political conversation where matters of moral welfare are concerned, there might be less need for a supreme judiciary to ride to their rescue where the integrity of state government or the power over commerce is concerned.

How to achieve this? That is left to the reader. Nagel is more descriptive than prescriptive. This, too, sets him apart from most of his colleagues in the field, who are apt to declaim their solutions to constitutional problems with overweening confidence. Maybe this is a sign of Nagel’s humility, or of an underlying pessimism. Or maybe it is that his work evinces the spirit not of the self-righteous prophet but of the careful pathologist, probing the tissues of the body politic with a view to identifying its deadliest cancers.

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FEDERALISM'S NEMESIS

Federalism, the Supreme Court, and the Seventeenth Amendment: The Irony of Constitutional Democracy,
by Ralph A. Rossum. Lexington Books, 307 pages, \$85.00 (cloth), \$26.95 (paper)

THE MESSAGE OF THIS BOOK IS BOTH profound and stark: federalism is dead and the 17th Amendment killed it. The U.S. Supreme Court should recognize this fact and withdraw from the field of federalism disputes, treating such matters as political questions best resolved by the political branches of government, specifically, the Congress.

Rossum's thesis is dynamite to liberals and conservatives who would have the Court intervene in federalism disputes to preserve the prerogatives of their pet constituencies. It will be particularly disconcerting to readers who believe that federal and state powers can be enumerated in sufficiently clear terms to allow judges the right and duty to police the resulting boundaries. After all, the standard version of the growth of federal governmental power during the New Deal and subsequent decades proclaims that federalism died with a series of landmark rulings from 1937 to 1942. The implication is that if the Court would only revert to something like its pre-1937 jurisprudence we could end up with "real federalism" again. Rossum argues, however, that this view is both illiberal and the very antithesis of the framers' original idea of federalism, disregarding the principal means through which liberty was to be secured in the American constitutional order.

Federal power was not to be restrained, on the original view, by ineffectual "parchment barriers" or the "cloudy medium" of words. Rather, it was to be restrained, in the words of James Madison, by "so contriving the interior structure of the government, as that its several constituent parts may, by their mutual relations, be the means of keeping each other in their proper places." Alexander Hamilton pointed out in *The Federalist* that the Court's power to invalidate congressional measures was limited to those rare instances in which Congress disregarded "certain specified exceptions to legislative authority," such as passing legislation akin to a bill of attainder or *ex post facto* law. These types of cases—judicially manageable—were qualitatively distinct from cases involving the division of federal and state powers—matters not judicially manageable. Questions of the latter type did not involve "specified exceptions" to federal lawmaking but, rather, prudential judgments, which had to be "agreed to by a Senate elected by state legislatures, concerning the outer reaches of

delegated congressional powers." Decisions such as these were immune to judicial review because they were not—and could never be—"contrary to the manifest tenor of the Constitution," which Hamilton had stipulated was the precondition for judicial invalidation of federal or state laws.

If federalism was to be protected structurally, not judicially, then of seminal importance to this structure was the mode of electing the Senate. It was this mode of election (by state legislatures) and not the equal representation of states that was the critical element of the Senate's role in federalism.

There were two reasons why it was critical that senators be elected by their state legislatures rather than popularly, as the 17th Amendment, adopted in 1913, provides. First, as George Mason remarked, "A private Citizen of a State is indifferent whether power be exercised by the [General] or State Legislatures, provided it be exercised most for his happiness." In other words, when it comes to understanding federal and state exercises of power—how power is exercised and how it should be exercised—the lay voter is clueless. Second, it was only through the medium of legislative selection that senators could be trusted to represent the states as states in the national legislature. The Constitution was based on a political anthropology that understood men to be ambitious and self-interested. As long as state legislatures remained the masters of senators, senators could be counted on to look after state interests. Once the 17th Amendment and the direct election of senators severed this tie, state interests and senatorial interests would go their separate ways. The legacy of this separation is now all too familiar: after the amendment's ratification, the national government's powers grew like topsy.

Rossum's argument is refreshing for many reasons, not the least of which is that it speaks to the increasing judicial rationalism that has been imposed on American politics, the idea that messy political disputes that depend on complex political negotiations, compromise, deliberation, and judgment can be reduced to simplistic, frequently simpleminded, legal formulae. The presumption that the judiciary has not merely the authority but the moral, social, and political knowledge necessary to resolve complex political disputes has been the

hallmark of the Supreme Court since the Warren era, particularly since the reapportionment decisions of the 1960s. Yet as Rossum reminds us, the Burger and Rehnquist Courts have been the most activist in the field of federalism disputes, resurrecting a federalism jurisprudence in *National League of Cities v. Usery* (1976) and moving this initiative forward through a host of decisions in the 1990s that attempted to protect state sovereignty on various grounds, including idiosyncratic constructions of the Commerce Clause, Section 5 of the 14th Amendment, and the 11th Amendment.

AS COMPELLING AS ROSSUM'S ARGUMENT is, it is fair to ask whether the framers intended as emphatic a separation of judicial review from federalism as he suggests. To take two examples: In *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), Chief Justice John Marshall remarked, "Should Congress, in the execution of its powers, adopt measures which are prohibited by the Constitution; or should Congress, under the pretext of executing its powers, pass laws for the accomplishment of objects not entrusted to the government; it would become the painful duty of this tribunal, should a case requiring such a decision come before it, to say that such an act was not the law of the land." In an endnote to his chapter on "Marshall's Understanding of the Original Federal Design," Rossum explains this comment as repeating a distinction Marshall had developed earlier in the case between federalism questions that concerned "the great principles of liberty" and those that concerned how "the respective powers of those who are equally the representatives of the people, are to be adjusted." The former questions were susceptible to judicial review. The latter were not: "on these matters, the Court would have to defer to congressional practice."

But this is not, apparently, what Marshall meant by his reference to the Court's "painful duty." On Marshall's reading, congressional powers were limited to the ends enumerated in the Constitution—and this was true not only when congressional acts were in explicit violation of the Constitution but even when Congress acted pretextually. There is little doubt Marshall gave Congress broad discretion when determining the means of exercising congressional powers. But it is equally clear that federalism disputes concerning the ends or objects of

congressional legislation were subject to judicial review. And if the judiciary was in for a penny, it was in for a pound. All of the messy legal disputes over where precisely federal powers ended and state powers began became the prerogative of judicial review.

Marshall was not alone in his assessment. In *The Federalist*, for instance, James Madison affirmed both that the federal government's "jurisdiction extend[ed] to certain enumerated objects only" and that "in controversies relating to the boundary between the two jurisdictions [federal and state], the tribunal which is ultimately to decide, is to be established under the general Government." Such a tribunal was "clearly essential to prevent an appeal to the sword, and a dissolution of the compact; and that it ought to be established under the general, rather than under the local Governments; or to speak more properly, that it could be safely established under the first alone, is a position not likely to be combated." However much Madison sought to keep federal power in check through the structure of the national government, he contemplated those

instances in which resort to an impartial federal tribunal would be necessary to resolve federal-state boundary disputes.

None of this detracts from Rossum's penetrating analysis of historical and legislative texts or his demonstration of the difficulty the Court has had constructing coherent tests to be applied in federal-state conflicts. Readers may find such tests a necessary prerequisite to preserving the American constitutional order. But they may also agree with Rossum that judicial intervention on behalf of original federalism has undermined the animating objective of the 17th Amendment. Rossum captures the constitutional irony: "An amendment, intended to promote democracy, even at the expense of federalism, has been undermined by an activist Court, intent on protecting federalism, even at the expense of the democratic principle."

Rossum has provided us a profound and scholarly book. It may not leave us much hope for the future of American federalism. It may remain silent on precisely why, if federalism questions were simply matters of prudential

judgment to be protected structurally, there was any need to enumerate specific congressional powers or limitations on congressional and state prerogatives in Article I of the Constitution. Whatever its shortcomings—and these are very few—*Federalism, the Supreme Court, and the Seventeenth Amendment* presents a thoughtful and persuasive account of how an amendment, whose effects on federalism were unexplored at its adoption and remain forgotten today, has transformed our political life. Tocqueville warned that the insatiable demands of equality could have corrosive effects on those constitutional forms essential to democratic regimes. In the case of the Senate, more democracy has meant less federalism. And less federalism has meant the growth of that tutelary state which Tocqueville warned could "extend its reach over the whole of society, covering its surface with a network of complicated, minute, and uniform petty rules."

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Book Review by Larry Arnhart

NATURAL RIGHT AND BIOTECHNOLOGY

Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution,
by Francis Fukuyama. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 256 pages, \$25

IN THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, Thomas Jefferson appealed to "the laws of nature and of nature's God" as the grounds for natural justice. But what happens when many people decide that belief in an eternal Creator or in a natural order shaped by such a Creator is an illusion? If the universe has no cosmic meaning or purpose, can we give our lives moral dignity by creating and then obeying our own norms for thought and action? Or must this idea of the moral emptiness of the universe have degrading effects on human life?

In 19th-century Europe and America, the apparent decline in religious belief and growth in scientific materialism led many thinkers to ask such questions as they worried that the loss of faith would bring a moral, intellectual, and political crisis. The most provocative manifestation of that crisis was in the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche, who proclaimed that "God is dead." He warned that Europe was approaching a nihilist catastrophe in which human beings would

have to choose how to live without knowing that any choice is ultimately better than another. To escape the emptiness of their lives, some people would distract themselves by pursuing a soft life of petty pleasures. Others would choose to satisfy their desire for domination by tyrannizing over others.

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution seemed to many people to support Nietzsche's position. In one of his early notebooks, Darwin wrote: "Man in his arrogance thinks himself a great work, worthy of the interposition of a deity. More humble, and I believe true, to consider him created from animals." What are the moral consequences of doubting the traditional religious belief that human beings were created by God in His image, and believing instead that human beings were "created from animals"? Many of Darwin's critics worried that this would destroy morality by denying the transcendent grounds for the moral dignity of human beings as set apart from, and above, everything else in the

material universe. Darwin himself, however, denied this, because he agreed with Jefferson that human beings were endowed with a natural moral sense. In *The Descent of Man*, Darwin explained how this moral sense was instilled in human nature as shaped by natural selection in evolutionary history.

Furthermore, although Darwin was evasive about his personal religious beliefs, he consistently affirmed that his account of evolution by natural selection left open the possibility that God acted as First Cause in bringing the universe into existence out of nothing. If all of nature is ultimately God's creation, then there is nothing ignoble in the origin of human beings as "created from animals."

For many observers, the first half of the twentieth century manifested the disastrous consequences of Nietzschean atheism and Darwinian materialism. In World War I, some German militarists spoke openly of their view of the world as governed by "the will to power"

and “the survival of the fittest.” In World War II, Adolf Hitler’s Nazis combined the nihilism of Nietzschean philosophy and the racism of social Darwinism. In the second half of the twentieth century, however, history seemed to turn in favor of liberal democratic regimes based on natural rights. First the defeat of the fascist and Nazi regimes and then the collapse of the major Marxist regimes seemed to vindicate the strength of liberal democracy.

Francis Fukuyama’s famous article of 1989 in *The National Interest*—“The End of History?”—offered a philosophic explanation for this. History as the human search for the fully satisfying social order had come to an end, Fukuyama declared, because most people around the world today agree, at least in principle, that liberal democracy is the only fully satisfying social order. To be sure, there will be some resistance to liberal democracy in certain parts of the world—Islamic fundamentalism, for example. But Fukuyama argued that although such resistance will create international conflict, this will only delay the inevitable victory of liberal democracy. He explained that there is an enduring human nature that includes natural desires—such as the desire for material comfort and the desire for social recognition—which human beings can fully satisfy only in a liberal democracy.

And yet Fukuyama has often vacillated on the question of whether this argument can withstand the challenges coming from Nietzschean philosophy and Darwinian science. After all, if there are no eternal standards of right and wrong dictated by God or nature, what prevents a Nietzschean Superman from asserting his will to power over others? Why shouldn’t we use the power over nature that comes from modern science to alter human nature in ways that would satisfy everyone? Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* showed how modern science could be used to breed a race of dominant masters to rule over their happy slaves.

ONE OF THE OBJECTIONS TO FUKUYAMA’S original “end of history” argument was that we have not yet reached the end of history because we have not yet reached the end of science. Particularly in the life sciences, our growing knowledge of—and power over—human nature will create an unprecedented moral crisis as we decide whether and how we want to use biotechnology to change human nature. In an article in 1999 in *The National Interest*—on the 10th anniversary of his “End of History?” article—Fukuyama admitted that this was the one objection to his original article that he could not answer. His new book, *Our Posthuman Future*, is his answer to this fundamental challenge.

Fukuyama begins his book by acknowledg-

ing the power of Huxley’s vision of the end of history. Life in *Brave New World* is so seductively attractive that it is hard to see the evil. Reproductive technology and medical science are used to make sure that everyone is happy, healthy, and adapted for their role in society. People have been bred in hatcheries to have the abilities and propensities of a particular caste to serve the collective welfare of the world state. The biological family is abolished so that no one is disturbed by the emotional stress of familial responsibilities and conflicts. Sexual gratification is accessible to all. There are specific government agencies to make sure that every desire is satisfied. There is no religion because no one has any transcendent longings. When people feel depressed or anxious, they can take soma, a psychotropic drug that induces states of dreamy euphoria. No one reads Shakespeare, because he assumes a world of pain, struggle, conflict, and longing that is incomprehensible to the happy people of *Brave New World*.

Of course, we all know what’s wrong with these people. Although they may be healthy and happy, they are no longer fully human beings. “Their world has become unnatural in the most profound sense imaginable,” Fukuyama observes, “because human nature has been altered.” Fukuyama insists that we cannot stop here, however, because there is a deeper question. Why should we want to preserve our human nature as traditionally understood if we have the power through biotechnology to change it in ways that would make everyone healthier and happier?

One answer would come from Biblical religion. Since human beings have been created in God’s image, and this is the ground of their moral dignity, it would violate God’s order and deprive human beings of their sacred worth to radically change what God has ordained.

Although Fukuyama respects this appeal to religious belief, he thinks that human nature itself should provide its own ground for resisting a move towards “posthumanity.” Human nature sets the foundation for moral experience, and therefore we should be cautious about using biotechnology in ways that would deprive us of that ultimate source of value in our human nature. He identifies this position as Aristotelian, which suggests a secular philosophic stance that does not depend on religious belief. He explains: “Aristotle argued, in effect, that human notions of right and wrong—what we today call human rights—were ultimately based on human nature.” Believing that “the good was defined by what people desired,” Aristotle thought that to understand moral experience we must understand “how natural desires, purposes, traits, and behaviors fit together into a human whole.” By appealing to the natural desires as morally

decisive, Aristotle was like the utilitarians. But unlike the utilitarians, Aristotle did not reduce all natural desires to some simple desire to maximize pleasure and avoid pain. Rather, Aristotle saw the moral problem as a matter of deliberately organizing the complex and diverse ends of human beings in order to satisfy the full range of natural desires over a whole life. Fukuyama’s book is an elaborate argument for his Aristotelian moral appeal to human nature—particularly, as constituted by the natural desires—to guide us in regulating biotechnology.

IN THE FIRST PART OF THE BOOK, FUKUYAMA surveys the recent advances in the biological sciences that promise a future power to change human nature through biotechnology. The brain sciences are giving us greater understanding of how the mechanisms of the brain shape human thought, emotion, and behavior. Neuropharmacology allows us to control brain states—including the cognitive and affective components of personality—through psychotropic drugs such as Prozac and Ritalin. The biological understanding of the aging process will probably lengthen the human life span in ways that will alter our traditional views of life and death. The ultimate power over human nature would be to use genetic engineering to modify the DNA in human embryos in ways that would be passed on to future generations. Although this power might be far off in the future, we already have the power through *in vitro* fertilization to allow parents to choose which embryos they want to implant in the mother’s womb based on genetic analysis of the embryos available. Increasing precision in genetic analysis of the DNA in embryos could eventually lead to “designer babies” that would reflect the deliberate choices of parents about the genetic nature of their children.

As was true for eugenics programs in the early part of the twentieth century, the scientific breeding of human beings in Huxley’s *Brave New World* was carried out by government through coercive measures. Such involuntary programs arouse such repugnance today that it is unlikely that we will ever again allow such governmental projects. But that leaves open the possibility of a new form of eugenics carried out through the voluntary choices of parents who use biotechnology to produce the kind of children they want. Libertarians who would resist state-sponsored eugenics often see nothing wrong with leaving parents free to employ whatever reproductive means science and the medical marketplace provide. Fukuyama rightly sees this as the great challenge for those who would resist the new eugenics: they must explain what harm there can be in allowing parents to freely decide the genetic character of their children.

Religious objections to "playing God" might restrain some parents, but such objections will not prevail with those who do not share such religious beliefs. Utilitarian concerns about the physical harm to children that might come from new reproductive techniques will impose some restraint, but utilitarian considerations of costs and benefits usually give little weight to the subtle psychological consequences of unnatural reproductive procedures that might have dehumanizing effects. If the ultimate danger is the loss of our humanity, then we need some explanation of the human essence, of how we might lose it, and why we should worry about losing it.

In the second part of his book, Fukuyama tries to explain the essence and the importance of human nature. Modern liberal democracy depends on the moral appeal to "human rights." But "human rights" implicitly depend on an understanding of "human nature" as possessing "human dignity." So, for example, the idea that human beings have a right to life assumes that the desire for self-preservation is a part of human nature that cannot be denied without denying human dignity. Even those libertarians who think human liberty should not be constrained by notions of human nature must themselves implicitly appeal to human nature. Those who speak of the "reproductive liberty" of parents assume that this liberty has moral status because it expresses a natural desire to produce and care for children that is so central to human nature that we should respect it.

To sustain his argument, Fukuyama must show how the desire to have children is only one of many desires that belong to human nature, and then he must show how the free use of biotechnology could distort that human nature in a dehumanizing way. Although his account of human nature is sometimes confusing, his final conclusion is that the essence of human nature is not some single factor such as reason, language, moral choice, or emotions but all of these traits brought into a "human whole." The aim in regulating biotechnology should then be preserving the integrity of this "human whole" from unnatural distortion.

In the last part of his book, Fukuyama lays out his practical arguments for regulatory policies governing biotechnology. It is commonly asserted that any attempt at governmental regulation of biotechnology will be futile, because people will find ways to evade the laws, and countries with strict regulations will simply drive people to other countries where scientists and entrepreneurs are free to satisfy the demand for the latest techniques. Fukuyama rejects this reasoning. He argues that there are many cases of scientific technologies that have been successfully regulated by the international commu-

nity. The many examples would include nuclear weapons, nuclear power, biological and chemical weapons, neuropharmacological drugs, and genetically modified foods. Of course, in each case, the regulation is imperfect. But the fact that legal rules can only be imperfectly enforced is no reason not to have the rules. After all, as Fukuyama observes, the laws against murder have never completely eliminated murder, but every society needs such laws.

Fukuyama does not recommend a specific set of rules for regulating biotechnology. But he does argue for a general policy of allowing biomedical techniques to be used for "therapeutic" purposes, while banning or restricting their use for "enhancement" purposes. Although he concedes that the distinction between "therapy" and "enhancement" is fuzzy, he insists that the distinction is still real, and it's the kind of distinction that lawmakers and regulators often make as a matter of practical judgment.

FUKUYAMA'S BOOK IS A BRILLIANT EXPOSITION of what he calls "the natural right approach" to biotechnology. For those of us who find such an approach attractive, this book provides an intellectual road map for thinking our way through the deepest moral and political debates of the twenty-first century.

To apply natural right reasoning to biotechnology, we will need to think more about at least four points where Fukuyama's reasoning is somewhat vague. He is vague about human nature. He is vague about religious belief. He is vague about the substantive content of his regulatory policies. And he is vague about whether Nietzsche's attack on natural right succeeds.

Reviewers of Fukuyama's book have noticed that although he relies on human nature as the ground of morality, he is vague about the content of human nature. J. Bottom, writing in *The Weekly Standard*, complained that Fukuyama does not give us the "thick account of human nature" that we need.

Fukuyama acknowledges my book, *Darwinian Natural Right*, in which I list 20 natural desires that are universal elements of human nature. I argue that if the good is the desirable, as Aristotle says, then morality can be rooted in the human nature of these natural desires. Moreover, Darwinian biology can explain these natural desires as part of human biological nature. Thus, Darwin's argument for a natural moral sense supports Aristotle's conception of natural right. While Fukuyama's Aristotelian "natural right approach" as rooted in human biology would seem close to my position, he rejects my list of 20 natural desires. "Such lists," he writes, "are likely to be controversial; they tend either to be too short and general, or overly specific and lacking in universality." He then explains:

"More important than a comprehensive definition for our present purposes is an effort to zero in on characteristics that are unique to the species." What we need to know, he says, is the "Factor X" that makes human beings unique in a way that gives them moral dignity. He then goes through a list of possible traits that would qualify as "Factor X": reason, language, consciousness, moral choice, human emotions, and other factors. But he finally concludes that what is decisive is not any one of these traits but the full gamut of traits that constitute "the human whole." This is confusing, because if one looks at his list of human traits, it corresponds closely to my list of natural desires.

I say that human beings naturally desire to care for children. And Fukuyama repeatedly speaks of parental care as a natural desire. I say that human beings naturally desire social ranking. And Fukuyama stresses the striving for social recognition as a natural desire. I say that human beings naturally desire political rule. And Fukuyama agrees that human beings are political animals by nature. Indeed, all of the 20 natural desires on my list appear in Fukuyama's account as elements of human nature. It is hard for me to understand how he can defend his notion of the "human whole" without embracing these natural human desires.

I also argue that human beings have a natural desire for religious understanding. But Fukuyama is vague about the role of religion. He says that human nature "conjointly with religion" is "what defines our most basic values." Yet he also says that he relies on "reasons that have nothing to do with religion," and that he defends "a concept of human dignity that does not depend on religious assumptions about the origins of man."

He quotes the claim of Pope John Paul II that there must be an "ontological leap" in the evolutionary process leading to human beings, in which the human soul is directly created by God, and that without this, it is impossible to maintain human dignity. Fukuyama is not clear whether he agrees with this or not. He speaks of the appearance of human consciousness as an "emergent" process in which properties arise at higher levels of complexity that cannot be fully reduced to lower levels. This seems to disagree with the Pope, who explicitly rejects explanations of the human mind as a product of natural "emergence." Fukuyama concludes: "The problem of how consciousness arose does not require recourse to the direct intervention of God." But then he immediately adds: "It does not, on the other hand, rule it out, either."

ONE WAY OUT OF THIS CONFUSION OVER the role of religion, which Fukuyama suggests in a few passages, would be the way taken by Jefferson and some of the other American

Founders. If there is a natural moral sense, then secular reason and religious belief can agree on morality. Even when diverse religious traditions come into conflict over theological doctrines, they should be able to agree on morality. And insofar as this morality is rooted in the desires of human nature, it should be knowable by purely natural human experience even without the benefit of revelation.

Appealing to a natural moral sense is essential for resolving moral disputes over biotechnology where the theological claims are neither clear enough nor persuasive enough to provide a common ground for the whole community. Fukuyama tries to evoke this moral sense in laying out his regulatory policies, but the content of his proposed policies is often vague. Struggling with the question of when human life begins, he finally concludes by taking the middle ground. "While an embryo can be assigned a lower moral status than an infant, it has a higher moral status than other kinds of cells or tissue that scientists work with." But he refuses to specify a policy for handling potential human life before birth. This could be defended as an intelligent vagueness that leaves room for such questions to be settled by prudential judgment and the political process of deliberative debate. Fukuyama is now participating in that political debate as a member

of President Bush's Council on Bioethics, chaired by Leon Kass.

Fukuyama is clear in recommending a complete ban on human reproductive cloning. But he is unclear about the reasoning supporting this. He declares that "cloning is a highly unnatural form of reproduction that will establish equally unnatural relationships between parents and children." It is "unnatural" because of the "asymmetrical relationship" that the cloned child will have to the parents—being the identical twin of one parent but completely unrelated to the other. He then stops without elaborating or defending his reasoning, which leaves the reader wondering about his argument. A reader might wonder, for example, how the "asymmetrical relationship" of stepchildren to their parents differs from what would arise from cloning.

Finally, Fukuyama is vague about his stance toward Nietzsche. The epigram for his book is a quotation from Nietzsche. Of the nine epigrams heading some of his chapters, five are quotations from Nietzsche. Yet he never explains the Nietzschean character of his argument. The few comments he does make about Nietzsche undercut his argument for Aristotelian natural right by suggesting that Nietzsche's attack on natural right might turn out to be correct. After speaking about the "human moral sense," he says: "It

may be the case that, as Nietzsche predicted, we are fated to move beyond this moral sense. But if so, we need to accept the consequences of the abandonment of natural standards for right and wrong forthrightly and recognize, as Nietzsche did, that this may lead us into territory that many of us don't want to visit." Such talk of being "fated" to move towards "the abandonment of natural standards for right and wrong" manifests a Nietzschean historicism that runs throughout much of Fukuyama's writing.

I have never found any proof in Nietzsche's writing that we are "fated" by history to go "beyond good and evil." I see no reason, therefore, to reject the claim of Aristotle, Jefferson, and Darwin that there is a natural moral sense rooted in human biological nature. The coming debates over biotechnology will test the strength of that moral-sense tradition. We could strengthen the moral-sense argument in the modern world by combining an Aristotelian conception of natural right and a Darwinian biology of human nature so that we could appeal to Darwinian natural right.

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Book Review by Joseph M. Bessette

SHAMELESS INJUSTICE

When the State Kills: Capital Punishment and the American Condition,
by Austin Sarat. Princeton University Press, 352 pages, \$17.95 (paper)

LIKE MOST ACADEMICIANS WHO WRITE on the subject, Austin Sarat, a professor of jurisprudence and political science at Amherst College, is opposed to the death penalty. Indeed, in a reflection offered without argument or defense midway through *When the State Kills*, Sarat writes that "the conscious, deliberate killing of citizens as an instrument of state policy is always an evil but never more so than in a democracy." It is not, however, the purpose of his book to make the moral case against the death penalty but rather to advance what Sarat calls "the new abolitionism," which decries "the spirit of vengeance and cultural division that attends the death penalty," seeks to promote "the work of healing the divisions in our culture," and, perhaps most importantly, "offers us the

chance to escape the compulsion . . . to cast problems of crime and punishment in morally simplistic terms."

The death penalty, more so than any other punishment meted out by American courts, rests on a moral judgment about good and evil, responsibility and blame. It encourages society "to focus compulsively on fixing individual responsibility and apportioning blame," resting as it does on "clear typologies of good and evil, victim and villain." It "responds to insistent demands that we use punishment to restore clarity to the moral order."

Sarat returns to this issue again and again throughout the book. In capital trials, for example, prosecutors regularly construct narratives that "project a sociologically simple world

of good and evil, and a morally clear world of responsibility and desert." Sarat is particularly troubled by the success prosecutors have in persuading juries to see the world in the same morally simplistic way. He calls this "the mystery of how jurors are enlisted as agents of the killing state." Here he recounts in some detail the case of John Henry Connors. Late one night Connors and two friends entered a convenience store in Bowling, Georgia, after spending several hours "driving around, smoking marijuana, and drinking. Each had a gun." When the store clerk, Andy Donaldson, finished ringing up the purchases and opened the register to make change, "Connors suddenly pulled out the .357 Magnum pistol...and shot Donaldson in the chest." Donaldson then "fell to the floor in a bloody heap,

moaning and writhing in pain while Connors took ten one-dollar bills and some food stamps from the register. Connors then leaned over the counter and fired a second shot, which hit Donaldson above the left eye." Subsequently, a jury convicted Connors of murder and recommended a sentence of death; or, as Sarat put it, the "jurors allow[ed] themselves to be enlisted as authorizing agents of capital punishment." Why? Because they felt a "compulsion" to assign responsibility and explain motivation." In the end, the jurors "refused to accept the picture of a social world of events governed by causes beyond human control [clearly Sarat's preferred position]; instead, they constructed a moral world of free agents making choices for which they could be held to account."

Later, Sarat criticizes popular movies about murder and the death penalty—especially *Dead Man Walking* (1996), *Last Dance* (1996), and *The Green Mile* (1999)—for conveying "a powerful double message: first, citizens can, and will, be held responsible for their acts; second, they can, and should, internalize and accept responsibility. . . . [T]hese films are grounded on the notion of a responsible person as the proper object of punishment." Sarat subsequently calls this "the supposed reality of individual responsibility."

Why "supposed" reality? Because a more accurate, or less "flat" view, would "blur the distinction between criminals and victims," focus on "the conditions that breed crime," "implicate us all in the circumstances that produce crime," and, in the end, "undermine the moral and legal scaffolding on which the apparatus of punishment is built." If, however, we embrace this more complex view of reality, one in which criminals are themselves victims of forces and conditions over which they have no control but in which we are all in some way implicated, what would follow for our criminal justice system? How would we punish the Timothy McVeighs or

John Wayne Gacys among us? And what of rapists and robbers? How could any criminal (if indeed we continued to use the term) be deemed to deserve punishment? Here Sarat, unlike his more forthright intellectual progenitors such as Ramsey Clark or the psychologist Karl Menninger (*The Crime of Punishment*), offers nary a clue. Abolish the death penalty and you begin to undermine the "simplistic" moral judgments that support the entire "apparatus of punishment." If that apparatus comes tumbling down, what then? It is a great virtue of *When the State Kills* that it clarifies the high stakes involved in the culture war over capital punishment and thereby reminds us of one of the strongest arguments for the death penalty.

THE DEATH PENALTY WHEN IMPOSED ON murderers is the one punishment that is more or less equivalent in severity to the criminal offense itself. We kill (some) murderers, but we do not rape rapists, rob robbers, or assault those who beat and maim. Thus the death penalty remains our only residue of the biblical injunction to exact "life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot" (Deuteronomy 19: 21)—an injunction that was intended not, as is sometimes supposed, to legitimize revenge, but rather to limit the "paying back" to the level of seriousness of the original offense. It is this notion of justice—that offenders deserve to suffer as much harm as what they intentionally cause others—that has formed the bedrock justification for the execution of murderers for as long as we have records. And it is this notion of justice that offends Austin Sarat and so many opponents of capital punishment.

The stakes here also have a particular political dimension. To believe in the possibility of clearly distinguishing good from evil and innocence from guilt and to believe in free will and personal responsibility is to be on one side of the culture

wars. The "conservative cultural politics" embodied in the acceptance of the death penalty on such grounds, Sarat says, endorses "the legal and political status quo. Thus cultural conservatism ends up serving the cause of legal and political conservatism." What is missing here is any description of the kind of legal, social, and political order that could be constructed on the rejection of the distinction between good and evil and on the denial of personal moral responsibility.

In October, the country was transfixed by the story of the sniper, or snipers, around Washington D.C. who calmly shot down more than a dozen people as they went about their business at schools, gas stations, and other innocent venues. Most Americans have no trouble applying what Sarat calls, pejoratively, "the simplifying effort to distinguish evil from good" to such a situation. And most would prefer to live in a world where evil is recognized and dealt with as such, and where, to every possible extent, the innocent are protected from those who would do them harm. President Ronald Reagan reminded us that the Soviet Union was an "evil empire" and President George W. Bush identified as "evildoers" those responsible for the mass murders of September 11, 2001. Yet even after nearly a decade of declining murder rates, there are five times as many homicides in the United States each year as there were on September 11. Evil was not introduced into the modern world by the Soviet Union or by al-Qaeda terrorists. It is an ever present aspect of the human condition, which is well understood by those average American citizens who, some 200 times each year, serving as jurors in murder cases, recommend the ultimate punishment to those who perpetrate the most heinous crimes.

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TO BE YOUNG, CONSERVATIVE, AND COOL

Letters to a Young Conservative, by Dinesh D'Souza.
Basic Books, 224 pages, \$22

WHO BETTER THAN DINESH D'SOUZA to write *Letters to a Young Conservative*, the latest volume in Basic Books' "Art of Mentoring" series? After all, D'Souza's name and the image of a young, brash conservative movement have gone hand-in-hand for more than a decade.

Consider his career: it was D'Souza who coined, or at least exhumed, the term "politically correct" to define modern left-liberal orthodoxy; D'Souza who cut his teeth as editor of the delightfully irreverent *Dartmouth Review* in the 1980s, and then served as Reagan's domestic policy adviser; and D'Souza who, when barely into his thirties, produced two best-selling books, *Illiberal Education* and *The End of Racism*, that were bracing tonics for the conservative mind, young and old. Even now, pushing 40 (Dinesh D'Souza, 40?), his face is still boyish, his public manner still smartly polemical, and his overall image still that of the right-wing young Turk, the *enfant terrible* of the culture wars. Even as a senior citizen, one imagines, he will still be thought of as the prototypical "young conservative."

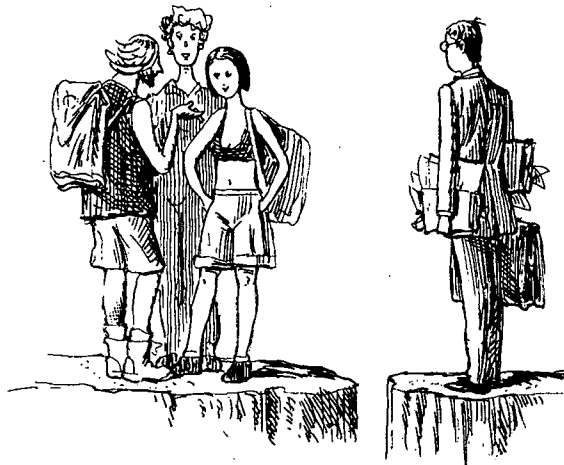
So what does he have to tell the next generation of young men (and women) of the Right—or rather, what does he have to tell "Chris," his fictional correspondent, who is apparently a student at some nameless left-leaning college?

In a word, *everything*. D'Souza writes his fictional correspondent 31 letters, each one brief, as is the book, and each one tackling a new topic, from statist excesses ("Why Government is the Problem") and libertarian delusions ("The Libertarian Temptation"), to the follies of academia ("Why Professors are so Left Wing") and the evils of race-based discrimination ("Why Affirmative Action Hurts Blacks"). At a breakneck pace, the book gallops through gun control and multiculturalism, eco-silliness and abortion, ending with a brief "conservative reading list" and an exhortation to be "cheerful."

There are advantages to this format—D'Souza covers plenty of ground, and gives "Chris" a wide-ranging account of his own philosophy. He begins with the basics: "Being a conservative in America," he writes, "means conserving the principles of the American Revolution." In his reading of the American experiment, conservatism is best understood as a blend of classical liberalism and ancient virtue—"the belief

that there are moral standards in the universe and that living up to them is the best way to have a full and happy life." Recognizing the "warped timber of humanity," conservatism stands opposed to the modern liberal belief that "human nature is intrinsically good," and thus that "the great conflicts in the world...arise out of terrible misunderstandings that can be corrected through ongoing conversation and through the mediation of the United Nations."

From this intelligent (and safely mainstream) definition of conservatism, D'Souza makes his



way through the American political landscape, applying his principles to one issue after another—and, for "Chris's" sake, paying special attention to the nonsense that afflicts our colleges and universities. No one steeped in conservative politics will be particularly surprised by his conclusions: that "although the welfare state has lost some of its legitimacy, the federal government is still too large and overbearing," that racial preferences "devalue black achievements, and they intensify doubts about black capacity," or that "the feminist error was to embrace the value of the workplace as greater than the value of the home." Nor will they be surprised by his targets—campus sacred cows like Rigoberta Menchu, the liberal bias of the mass media—or by his heroes, men like Ronald Reagan and Abraham Lincoln.

Indeed, the lack of surprises proves to be the book's greatest weakness. D'Souza has written a volume ideal for the true political neophyte, but the political neophyte at any elite university is unlikely to be receptive to conservative ideas of any kind. The suffocating liberalism of modern college life is so strong that any conservative

unlucky enough to arrive without a sturdy intellectual base for his convictions will be almost inevitably yanked leftward within a year—or less. This means, in turn, that the few right-thinking men and women at colleges like the one that "Chris" supposedly attends must be already well-informed, well-read, and well-grounded in conservative ideas.

Having recently emerged from four years at one of America's most famous—and famously liberal—colleges, I can promise D'Souza that the young conservative doesn't need to be told, yet again, why affirmative action is wrong or why big government is bad for America. He needs to be told how to communicate these ideas to an utterly unreceptive liberal campus, where antipathy toward conservatives is less a political position than a cultural prejudice. He needs to overcome not well-reasoned political arguments but sneers and japes and rolling eyeballs.

I can still hear the voices, echoing in dorm rooms and dining halls, and spilling unthinkingly through ivy-hung courtyards and musty classrooms: *Oh, the Christian Right is so scary...George Bush is so stupid...they're all redneck gun nuts and religious fanatics...John Ashcroft is such a fascist...*

And above all, delivered in a vaguely scandalized tone—you're not, like, a Republican, are you?

This isn't simply a war of ideas—it's a war of attitudes, in which conservative-bashing is the last acceptable form of bigotry. It is here that D'Souza's *Letters* fails the young conservative, by offering "Chris" a comprehensive policy briefing—the literary equivalent of forcing an eager child to eat his peas, and broccoli, and cauliflower, without any promise of dessert. The fare is nutritious, sure, but it lacks panache—and panache, which served the young(er) D'Souza so well 20 years ago, is exactly what the young conservative needs to break through the suffocating condescension of his liberal peers.

It's a shame, because early on there are hints of a better, more exciting model being tried out, and then discarded. The beginning of the *Letters* is devoted to D'Souza's own college years, and it offers a brief and hilarious sketch of life at the *Dartmouth Review*. The *Review*, of course, was a major organ of the young, Reagan-sparked revival that produced much of the modern conservative intelligentsia, and D'Souza was present at the creation. In stinging prose that recalls his own *Illiberal Education*, he relates the various ex-

plots that earned the *Review* national fame. This chapter is a treat for those who have never read how a *Review* reporter was nearly expelled for "vexatious oral exchange" with a professor; how Dartmouth conservatives founded a Bestiality Society to protest the funding of campus gay groups; or how the *Review* tape-recorded, and then printed, the racist ramblings of a wacky left-wing prof, leading first to a libel suit and then to his resignation. "The last I heard," D'Souza remarks, "he had opened a drum store

somewhere in Vermont."

But then D'Souza leaves Dartmouth behind, and the book never quite recovers. The exciting tales of young conservatives tilting at windmills give way to dryer, more pedantic fare, in which the author's ideas are seldom wrong, but rarely exciting or novel.

This is a great mistake, since tales of right-wing derring-do—reactionary chic, even—are just what is needed to cheer the heart of today's young conservative. After all, we're already right.

What we need, and what D'Souza ultimately fails to provide, is an up-to-the-minute lesson in how to be cool. It hardly seems fair to ask of the eternally young Dinesh, but what might be most invigorating to this and coming generations of college conservatives is a *Memoirs of My Revolutionary Youth*.

Ross Douhat is an editorial analyst at the Atlantic Monthly and a 2002 Publius Fellow of the Claremont Institute.

Book Review by Glenn Ellmers

STAR-SPANGLED SNOBBERY

Snobbery: The American Version, by Joseph Epstein.
Houghton Mifflin, 274 pages, \$25

THERE ARE THOSE WHO WOULD BRISTLE even at the suggestion that there is an "American version" of snobbery. We are a democratic, practical people, not given to affectation and display like those Europeans with their lords and castles. Nor do we, like the cold and formal Japanese, go in for a lot of ceremony over social status (all that bowing!). We believe that all men are created equal, and we judge a man by the content of his character, not the color of his kimono. Snobbery? Not in the land of Ben Franklin and Tom Sawyer.

Joseph Epstein, however, does not quite agree. And that by itself is enough to warrant reconsideration. The author of several collections of essays and two books (on ambition and divorce), Epstein is likely known to readers through the pages of *Commentary*, *The Weekly Standard*, and above all, the *American Scholar*, of which he was the distinguished editor for many years.

Epstein's snob is a pretty disgusting specimen. Simultaneously a toady to those above him and a bully to those below, the snob is a liar and fraud, constantly wracked by "uncertainty, uneasiness, and a worrisome self-consciousness about his true status." The snob, always on the move to suck up, brush off, or put down, can never be at peace.

For all its ugliness, however, snobbery can be something quite complicated, varied, and subtle. In addition to the usual snobberies of wealth, class, intellect, and "with-it-ry" (the snobbism of the hip or cool), Epstein shows that snobbery turns up in unexpected forms.

Consider the snobbery of victimhood. A person can be a snob by ostentatiously showcasing his sensitivity—usually nothing more—toward the oppressed. But it is even more effective, and delightful, to vaunt one's own supposed oppression and mistreatment.

Then there is snobbery within snobbery; what he calls "infuriating snobbery,"

—infuriating that is, if aimed at you. This is the snobbery that one is sometimes subjected to by people who don't understand what matters to you. ...One wants to explain to the people looking down on you that they really must get it clear that your own standards are well out of the range of their pathetic snobberies.

Snobbery, according to Epstein, only began in earnest in the modern world, specifically with the advent of democracy. "Where social rank is clearly demarcated, as it is when nobility and a gentry are present, jockeying for position of the kind that is at the heart of snobbery tends to play a less than strong part in daily life," he writes. "Snobbery thrives where society is most open." The reader may recognize here echoes of Tocqueville, whom Epstein quotes: "democratic institutions most successfully develop sentiments of envy in the human heart." Thus today's public figures do not pride themselves on honor or reputation gained by rising above the crowd. Instead, "virtuecrats"—a species of political snob Epstein finds predominantly on the Left—preen themselves on their empathy with the ordinary

man, whose presumed goodness they love to flatter. Epstein seems to endorse the putatively Tocquevillian observation that Americans, as the epitome of "democratic man," are especially prone to a snobbery of egalitarianism, and resent any claim to rising above an "equal" station. Yet, this is not Epstein's final word on the matter.

A central aspect of Epstein's thesis is that snobbery is not the recognition of true worth or excellence. "The essence of snobbery," he argues, "is arranging to make yourself feel superior at the expense of other people." So "it will not do to call everything that is extravagant, elitist, high-brow, or a minority taste snobbish. Something can have all the earmarks of snobbery and turn out to be—of all things!—absolutely worth it." Nor does a feeling or even display of individual superiority equal snobbery. Just as some goods are absolutely worth it, some people are—of all things!—better.

So where does this leave the "American version" of snobbery? This seems to be a difficult question. On the one hand, Epstein says that "Americans, for all their official allegiance to the notion of democracy, seem to long for an aristocracy." Nevertheless, "we hate what seem to us distinctions of rank not based on merit." Which is it? Or could this contradiction be merely a paradox? Americans may long for an aristocracy, but—in principle, and at our best—we seek the "natural aristocracy" made famous by Jefferson, the aristocracy of true ability and talent.

Tocqueville claimed that democracy lures us into the inordinate desire for total equality. But he also thought it intrinsic to human nature that

"the particular pride of individuals will always seek to escape the common level." We want to rise above the herd, through old-fashioned virtue, hard work, and true grit, if possible. But as Epstein incisively and often hilariously reminds us, the glitter of tinsel aristocracy is all around. And at one time or another, perhaps, we all pick up a strand or two.

The trick, one suspects, is being able to admit it, which helps us keep our perspective. Consider this small, elegant, erudite man who has literally written the book on the subject. Is Joseph Epstein in any meaningful sense a snob? Surely not

about money or possessions; nor the pleasures of the table ("I think it's almost immoral to spend more than \$30 on a bottle of wine"). If anything, this accomplished man of letters should be a language snob. Yet in an article last year in *The Wall Street Journal*, he admitted:

Having voted for George W. Bush for president, I find myself in the slightly awkward position of having to defend what I gather might be four or more years of a continuous drizzle of our forty-third president's ill-formed sentences, persistent

errors of verbal tact, and hilarious malapropos of a kind on which liberals can dine out.... [But] to be ungrammatical doesn't impugn a person's integrity; nor is a faulty metaphor a sign of bad character.... My advice to our forty-third president, then, is: let 'er rip, cowboy.

If Epstein is a snob, at least he is the American version.

Glenn Ellmers is associate publisher of the Claremont Review of Books.

BOOKS IN BRIEF



*Aliens in America:
The Strange Truth about Our Souls,*
by Peter Augustine Lawler.
ISI Books, 380 pages, \$24.95

Faith, Reason, and Political Life Today,
edited by Peter Augustine Lawler and
Dale McConkey. Lexington Books, 294 pages,
\$70 (cloth), \$24 (paper)



Through his books, anthologies, and editorship of *Perspectives on Political Science* (on whose editorial board this reviewer sits), Peter Augustine Lawler has established himself as a noteworthy voice in the debate over reason and revelation in contemporary political life. Throughout his scholarly career, Lawler has been guided by these highest of themes in his investigations, whether of Tocqueville, Vaclav Havel, or contemporary neoconservatives and leftists. David Brooks's *Bobos*, Whit Stillman's films, and Walker Percy's characters all play parts in his flailing of the postmodern American soul. In *Aliens in America*, Lawler treats the human soul in all its dimensions, as reflecting the Biblical God and the Platonic-Aristotelian nous, as part of political man and transpolitical man. He warns against interpretations of the Declaration of Independence and America that lead "toward an unreal and unvirtuous independence from nature and God."

Faith, Reason and Political Life Today, edited by Lawler and his colleague, Dale McConkey, elaborates these diverse themes. Treatments of "Star

Trek" (by Paul Cantor and Diana Schaub), Flannery O'Connor (by Henry Edmondson), and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (by Daniel Mahoney) bring forth themes such as globalization and statesmanship, and grace and redemption in contemporary political life. The most interesting of these essays is Paul Seaton's interpretation of Pierre Manent, the French Straussian and Christian.

As commendable as these books are, one wonders whether Lawler and these contributors mischaracterize American liberalism, which they identify with modernity. Might they appreciate the "liberalism" of I Peter, 2:16: "Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cloak for vice"?

—Ken Masugi



Medicare's Midlife Crisis,
by Sue A. Blevins.
Cato Institute, 133 pages, \$16.95



Sue A. Blevins' new book is to the health policy debate what Thomas Sowell's *The Vision of the Anointed* is to the social policy debate. The history of Medicare follows a pattern similar to other Progressive initiatives. It was a solution to a problem that did not exist. Contrary to liberal think-tank folklore, Blevins argues that the availability of health care to seniors had been on the rise, long before Medicare was adopted in 1965. In the course of offering a solution to a non-existent crisis, Medicare created a new set of very real problems: skyrocketing costs, inva-

sions of privacy, and interference in the doctor-patient relationship, to name a few.

Blevins paints a bleak picture of Medicare's demographic realities, noting that the Congressional Budget Office "points out that the number of beneficiaries in 2030 will be 90 percent greater than it is today, but the number of workers supporting Medicare will be only about 15 percent greater." The Medicare system is stretched to the limit. Any new additions, such as a prescription drug benefit, will likely push the system past the actuarial breaking point.

The Sisyphean cycle of Medicare — big government solutions creating problems that require big government solutions — can be broken, Blevins argues, by adopting something akin to President Bush's proposed Social Security savings account plan. A worker under such a plan could, upon retirement, purchase health coverage from a private insurer at a cost savings of 50 percent when compared to the current Medicare plan.

The sheer size of the looming Medicare financial crisis will continue to spawn a variety of proposed solutions. Blevins' preferred option is not the first or last word on this matter. But her analysis is indispensable.

—Brian P. Janiskee,

California State University, San Bernardino

◆◆ NEWLY PUBLISHED ◆◆

*Democracy in California
Politics and Government in the Golden State*
by Claremont Review of Books contributors Ken
Masugi and Brian P. Janiskee, from Rowman &
Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

IN MEMORIAM

SETH BENARDETE, 1930-2001

Essay by Richard L. Velkley

SETH BENARDETE LEFT BEHIND AN astonishing body of writing on the ancient poets, historians, and philosophers; translations of Greek tragedies and Platonic dialogues; five books of commentary on Plato; a book apiece on Homer, Herodotus, Sophocles; a volume of essays; and a long list of articles on many authors and subjects. Anyone having some acquaintance with his work readily produces a string of superlatives: extraordinary depth and subtlety of interpretation, vast erudition, audacious mastery of the most difficult texts and problems. He belongs to the rare company of classical exegetes who will endure as primary sources, since he was more than a scholar. He was a philosopher, one of the most important of the past half-century.

Born into a Brooklyn academic family of Sephardic origin, Benardete studied at the University of Chicago (1948-52, 1954-55) and wrote a dissertation on the *Iliad* for the Committee on Social Thought. He held fellowships in Athens, Florence, was a Harvard Junior Fellow, and taught at St. John's College, Annapolis, and Brandeis University before joining the classics department of New York University in 1965. At the same time he began giving courses in ancient philosophy at the New School for Social Research, a practice he continued for the rest of his career. He worked seven days a week in his tiny, windowless, and book-filled office, a short walk from his home. He was deeply indifferent to most aspects of conventional academic success. Ronna Burger, one of his foremost students, writes: "In his teaching and writing, but especially vividly in conversation—where humor, depth of insight, and soaring thought were inextricably intertwined—Benardete was a model of what it means to live a philosophic life."

His philosophical investigations were, of course, decisively formed by his study with Leo Strauss. Strauss made a gift of two volumes to the young Benardete, Aristotle's *Physics* and Martin Heidegger's *Holzwege*, whereby, no doubt, the teacher indicated his judgment of the remarkable student's potential for addressing the questions of first philosophy. In Benardete's later years, during the completion of his series of great Plato-studies, it was evident that Heidegger was much on his mind. Like Strauss, Benardete liked

to frame the questions in terms borrowed from Plato's famous image, in the *Republic*, of the city or the political association as a cave. Indeed, Benardete's continuation of Strauss's recovery of "the primary phenomena of the cave" was his way of carrying forward Strauss's central effort to respond to Heidegger's *Destruktion* of the Western tradition.

Benardete understood that Strauss's term "the natural cave" was paradoxical and ironic, for it refers to how political life appears from the standpoint of nature, once politics has been exposed by philosophy. It cannot connote some actual "cave"—whether of 5th-century Athens or any other time—that achieved the highest excellence and should be restored through practical-political efforts. To understand the cave naturally is to grasp the natural disparity between opinion and the search for truth. In Benardete's words, "political philosophy is the philosopher's ascent from, not his descent into, the cave. The philosopher always looks back, he never turns back, to the cave." Hence the natural cave, like the best city, exists only for philosophical thought or speech.

Our difficulty in grasping what Plato meant by the cave owes much to modern philosophy's attempt to understand the human things not by nature's light but by the lights of history. Heidegger brought the latter way of thinking to its highest development. As Strauss liked to say, modern man lived in "the cave beneath the cave," in a historical-cultural world of his own even further removed from the world illuminated by the natural sun. To say, with Strauss, that the natural cave can be occluded by history is to assert that the very concept of the philosophical ascent from opinion, from the cave, can be forgotten: philosophy is inherently subject to decay. Benardete (following Strauss) saw no inconsistency in speaking this way about nature, for nature is hierarchical; only at its bottom rung does nature mean "what prevails necessarily, everywhere and always." (Strauss argued that the egalitarian nature of modern natural right, with its claim of the necessary actualization of the good, is an indispensable condition for the "turn to history.") In Benardete's view, Strauss restored "the connection between political philosophy and ontology" by showing that Being must be approached as nature in this forgotten,

elusive, yet vital sense, since the hiddenness of Being is inseparable from the hiddenness of the philosophic nature. Benardete pursued this undertaking into unexplored terrain, wherein he made countless wonderful finds.

The center of Benardete's interpretations of Plato—from which his thought radiated to other authors—was Socrates' account of his "two sailings" in the *Phaedo*. Philosophy necessarily begins in error, for the natural way of the human mind is from and toward causes that exist in spurious independence from the wholes they would explain. In this separateness the causes reflect the character of speech as dividing and collecting. Thus before Socrates makes his turn to speeches, he does not see the root of his activity in *logos*, and hence he misses how the soul is crucial for the togetherness of things. This turn, or "second sailing," is the turn to political philosophy, for it reflects on the connection between the tendency to posit separate causes and the "idealism" or "vulgar Platonism" of opinion. Such "idealism" is at work in the *Republic*, Book IV, where spiritedness (or *thumos*) dominates the account of the tripartite soul, effecting what Benardete called a "thumoeidetic" division of appetite, spiritedness, and reason as separate *eide*. It can also be seen in the ascription to the city of a class structure based only on the soul as abstracted from the body.

In the *Republic*, Socrates enacts with full self-awareness a "first sailing" with his interlocutors. Indeed, every Socratic dialogue displays a first sailing in which the distorting perspectives of the interlocutors shape the discussion, thus revealing their souls even as their souls are hidden from themselves. Benardete boldly treated the "doctrine of ideas" as a form of the first sailing and as a vehicle by which Socrates tries to effect the turning of the soul (*periagoge*) toward itself. It is a sign of their not making the *periagoge* that Glaucon and Adeimantus do not see that the true best city is not the imaginary one of their speech, but is in motion before their eyes as the "dialogic city" of their conversation. Similarly they do not see that the true account of philosophic education would be the reflection on their own education with Socrates, and not the ideal account of Books VI-VII, an account as impossible as the imaginary best city. Their self-ignorance is related to the duality of speech

as articulation of the beings and as conversation, which duality is mirrored in the concerns of dialectic with eidetic and genetic modes of analysis.

Since all inquiry must be guided by the Good, or "interest," the conduct of inquiry is necessarily informed by the contingencies of persons and circumstances. The action disclosing how these contingencies shape the questions and the answers arising in the conversation unfolds the true argument of a Socratic dialogue. The "abstractions" of the dialogues (for example, the abstractions from *eros* in the *Republic* and in *Timaeus'* cosmology) correspond to the blindness of the speakers, and the explicit argument treats an apparently neglected issue through showing (rather than stating) what its absence entails. But through such abstraction the dialogues reflect the nature of the soul and achieve a kind of perfection. Since philosophy is made possible by error, or by the need to start with treating a part as apart from the whole rather than as a part of the whole, the best philosophic writing employs "phantastic" images proportioned to the soul's limitation. But this is to say that philosophic speech exploits the error intrinsic to political life, since the cave is the effort to treat a part (the city) as the whole. It is the error of the city's "idealism" to think that the best world would be one so well governed that law, and thus the city itself, would be unnecessary. The myth of the reversed cosmos in the *Statesman* describes a world in which there are no cities and the gods rule men as shepherds. It is a world without *eros* and without philosophy. Benardete spoke of "the teleology of evil," and noted that the frustration of the city's primary aim is the condition for the possibility of philosophy. The self-undermining

tendency of opinion allows the soul to look beyond opinion.

Through such reflections Benardete revealed with unsurpassed depth and precision the meaning of the marriage of philosophy and poetry in Plato. Moreover, he arrived at the conclusion that "the Socratic revolution in philosophy seems to be coeval with Greek poetry," and that Homer and Hesiod already grasped the philosophic truth about error and insight, argument and action. Benardete also saw in the Aristotelian treatises a poetic action correcting their explicit arguments: by seeming to found separate disciplines, Aristotle quietly shows what needs to be combined. On Benardete's reading, Heidegger might well have discovered in Plato and Aristotle an account of Being as that which is never present, as hidden by the beings and the sciences of them. But Heidegger, while seeing that Being cannot be caught in the net of "method," did not reflect adequately on how the quality of the soul of the thinker—and thus the political realm—conditions the access to Being. His profound efforts to renew the question of Being therefore fell into the error of conflating philosophic insights with demotic or popular revelations. On Benardete's reading he failed to complete the "second sailing."

The above comments offer only a glimpse of the vast range of Benardete's accomplishment. Perhaps the best path of entry into the cosmos of his thought is the collection of essays, *The Argument of the Action: Essays on Greek Poetry and Philosophy*, edited by Ronna Burger and Michael Davis (University of Chicago, 2000), to which the editors' introduction is a superb guide. The final essay ("Strauss on Plato") illuminates the principles of reading Platonic dialogues, as

does more expansively *The Rhetoric of Morality and Philosophy: Plato's "Gorgias" and "Phaedrus"* (Chicago, 1991). Socrates' "two sailings" are discussed in the essay "On Plato's *Phaedo*" in *The Argument*, and are the central theme of *Socrates' Second Sailing: On Plato's Republic* (Chicago, 1989). The Socratic analysis of the problem of causality in terms of the eidetic/genetic distinction figures in many of Benardete's studies, and notably in his accounts of what are commonly considered non-Socratic dialogues; for this see "On the *Timaeus*" in *The Argument*, and Plato's "Laws": *The Discovery of Being* (Chicago, 2000). Benardete treats the Socratic replacement of ideas as separate from soul and body with an account of *eidos* as the hidden thread of being "that always shows itself as other than it is" in *The Tragedy and Comedy of Life: Plato's "Philebus"* (Chicago, 1993). For the distinction between "eikastic" and "phantastic" image-making, and for the tendency of political life toward an absolutizing of law that is disastrous for *eros* and philosophy, see the commentary on the Platonic trilogy, *The Being of the Beautiful: Plato's "Theatetus," "Sophist," and "Statesman"* (Chicago, 1984). For Benardete's Socratic way of reading Greek poetry see the essay "On Greek Tragedy" in *The Argument*, and *The Bow and the Lyre: A Platonic Reading of the "Odyssey"* (Lanham, MD, 1997). For his related approach to Aristotle see "On Wisdom and Philosophy: The First Two Chapters of Aristotle's *Metaphysics A*" in *The Argument*.

Richard L. Velkley is associate professor of philosophy at the Catholic University of America, and associate editor of *The Review of Metaphysics*. His latest book is *Being After Rousseau: Philosophy and Culture in Question* (University of Chicago Press).

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C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

Dostoevsky and Reasoning Christianity

Dear Editor:

Reading Thomas G. West's "Sins of the Fathers" (Fall 2002), one is informed that Dostoevsky was a reactionary and an irrationalist of the worst sort, guilty of "self-indulgent sentimentality," "an anti-Jewish stance," subscribing to the "post-Hegelian premise: only will, and not reason, can guide us," and last, but not least, "patriarchalism." Yet, in the same essay, West writes: "no major writer of the 19th century saw so clearly into the evil heart of the 20th century," that "Dostoevsky deserves our respect" for "his passionate opposition to extreme tendencies of modern thought" and his "insight against the dominant historicism of his time." West may try to save himself with such contradictions, but I must take issue with his negative characterizations and skewed interpretations.

Notes from Underground is a no-nonsense polemic against British utilitarianism as espoused by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. It is a "rejection of reason" only if reason is understood as the sole wellspring of truth. As a Russian Orthodox Christian, Dostoevsky knew that faith must guide and direct the mind; unaided reason contorts reality. The twisted figure of the "underground man" asserts his will, but in his poignant dramatic monologue, he defends his freedom as a human being against a truncated view of reason and truth.

Ivan Karamazov, whom West dotes on, is merely one, and by no means the worst, of Dostoevsky's many deracinated intellectuals, who are led by their fiendishly clever and calculating minds. Ivan's fate, "brain fever" (insanity), is the same as Friedrich Nietzsche's. It is Nietzsche who glorifies the will, not Dostoevsky.

Those who have read and studied Dostoevsky also understand that he was not so much anti-Jewish (or anti-Polish, anti-Anglo, anti-French, anti-Roman Catholic, anti-Turk) as he was against certain national tendencies and religious views that were, in his estimation, de-humanizing. Dostoevsky had little use for sentimentality. Sonia (*Crime and Punishment*), who sells herself to feed her family, is certainly not "a Christian for whom faith is entirely a matter of sentiment." It is the drunk Marmeledov of the same novel, who may be considered on the borderline between the sentimental and the ridiculous.

To counter West's charge of "patriarchalism" would take me too far afield. I would very much recommend Serge Schmemmann's *Echoes of a Native Land*.

Finally, I would suggest that West re-read the major novels of Dostoevsky without the rose-colored spectacles of the American Founders, who most certainly were not Christians. I am sorry also to add that viewing Solzhenitsyn as "echo[ing] the spirit of the American Founders" is simply nonsense. Dostoevsky and Solzhenitsyn have more in common than not. Perhaps West is thinking of Yegor Gaidar and Ruslan Khasbulatov?

Adrian Valentino
Fort Collins, CO

Dear Editor:

West's analysis of Dostoevsky is brilliant and penetrating—but gravely flawed. In order to reject Dostoevsky's radical nihilism, West seems to reject the authority of God. Even if "most men" should follow paternal or divine authority, West writes, "following one's own reason does lead toward the good, if one has the mind for it."

But the history of philosophy is a continuing scandal of radical disagreement about the good. If philosophers of the caliber of Marx, Heidegger, Nietzsche, and Kojève cannot follow their reason toward the good, West must be mistaken. Unquestioning submission to "reason" may be no less "totalitarian" than "absolute faith in God." If, as he writes, reason must be "properly employed" and liberty "rightly understood," then they must be limited or conditioned by Something Higher.

Dostoevsky represented the Russian Orthodox tradition against St. Thomas Aquinas and the Latin Church's rationalism. West, however, fails to mention that in this Roman tradition, reason is embraced along with faith as the "two wings of the human spirit." Indeed, the Catholic Church stands virtually alone as the defender of reason against the nihilistic abandonment of reason prevalent today in philosophic and academic communities.

That the Catholic Church should be the last apologist of reason would have astonished Enlightenment philosophers such as Voltaire, Locke, and Montesquieu. West leaves this reader uncertain whether he has any disagreement with the Enlightenment's project to undermine the Church. With God as the source of both faith and "one's own reason," how then can anything less than total, unquestioning submission to Him not be insane, evil, and irrational?

Dennis Teti
Hyattsville, MD

Thomas G. West replies:

My article, "Sins of the Fathers," made the following argument: Dostoevsky believed that human reason is powerless to discover the truth. It leads to atheism and socialism. Dostoevsky saw no alternative except submission to authority, especially religious authority. As a Russian alternative to Dostoevsky's rejection of reason, I proposed Solzhenitsyn, who shows in his novels that reason can go far to indicate the basic virtues of a good life; to unveil the deficiencies of badly governed societies; and to suggest political reforms that would improve them. As the American alternative to Dostoevsky's rejection of reason, I proposed the approach of the American Founders.

The two letters to the editor unintentionally confirm that my critique of Dostoevsky was on the mark. Adrian Valentino complains that I accuse Dostoevsky of being an "irrationalist." But Valentino's own summary of Dostoevsky confirms my charge. He writes, "As a Russian Orthodox Christian, Dostoevsky knew that faith must guide and direct the mind; unaided reason contorts reality."

In other words, Dostoevsky, according to Valentino, believes that reason does not lead to truth. That is why I argued Dostoevsky teaches that human beings must follow some non-rational principle, some religious authority that goes against what reason teaches. That is why Dostoevsky biographer Joseph Frank labels our novelist a "religious irrationalist," a characterization I agree with.

Valentino calls "nonsense" my suggestion that Solzhenitsyn shares something of the spirit of the American Founders. He should read the passages that I cited in my review, especially the Stolypin chapter of *August 1914*. The last great Russian statesman before the Communist Revolution of 1917, Stolypin proposed a program of private property rights, local self-government, the rule of law, and respect for Christianity that would have saved Russia from a century of terror and degradation. His plans were defeated by a combination of irrational liberals and irrational reactionaries, some of whom had probably read Dostoevsky, who despised America, which in those days was based on many of the same ideas that Stolypin was advocating for Russia. The American Founders would have been entirely sympathetic to Stolypin's plans. Unlike Dostoevsky, Solzhenitsyn's hero Stolypin was no mystical or romantic dreamer of communities of love based on authority.

Valentino belittles the American Founders as not Christian. It does not take much study of founding era documents to discover that the American people and their leaders were either Christians themselves, or else profoundly respectful of Christianity as the prevailing and "benign religion" (Jefferson) of the nation. (According to a report mentioned in Joseph Frank's biography, Dostoevsky once called himself a "philosophical deist," implying that his respectful stance toward Russian Orthodoxy was not based on an acceptance of all of its doctrines.) To dismiss America's Founders and then to compare them to men like Gaidar and Khasbulatov—associates of the lawless and undemocratic thugs who currently run Russia—is a libel founded in ignorance.

Dennis Teti's letter starts out as a defense of Dostoevsky but quickly turns into a defense of the Catholic faith—as if that were the question at issue here. To this end, Teti makes two main points that contradict each other. On the one hand, reason cannot discover truth. On the other hand, it can.

First, Teti argues that I was wrong when I

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✧

wrote, "following one's own reason does lead toward the good, if one has the mind for it." Teti responds that "the history of philosophy is a continuing scandal of radical disagreement about the good." However, Aquinas, whom Teti also mentions, agrees with me and disagrees with Teti on this point. For Aquinas, reason is unquestionably able to discover the laws of nature, that is, the basic principles of conduct that lead human beings toward the good. Aristotle, whom Aquinas calls "the philosopher," did not have the benefit of faith to guide his reason.

As for "Marx, Heidegger, Nietzsche, and

Kojève," they were under the spell of the modern prejudice in favor of progress and history, as Leo Strauss has demonstrated. Reason can err. Who denies this?

Teti says my account is "gravely flawed" because "West seems to reject the authority of God." My target was not God but rather a mindless faith in authority. The best Christian theologians argue for a prominent place for human reason as we try to understand God's law, whether revealed in Scripture or discovered by reason.

Contrary to Dostoevsky, I do not believe that reason leads to atheism. Instead, in agreement with Socrates, Locke, and many other philosophers, I find the intelligent design of the world strong evidence for God's existence. Nor can the possibility of revelation be disproved by reason, as the philosophers also agree.

Teti wavers on the question of whether reason is or is not capable of discovering truth because he ultimately thinks reason goes astray without faith, and yet his own faith affirms that reason is good. Teti should become more faithful to the teachings of Aquinas.



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Editors' Note: Mr. Antongiavanni is just putting the finishing touches on a book that will give fresh relevance to Niccolo Machiavelli's classic, *The Prince*. We are proud to present an exclusive sampling from the first few stylish chapters.

THE DANDY: AN ESSAY ON MEN'S CLOTHING

by Nicholas Antongiavanni



Men in general judge more by their eyes than by their hands, because seeing is given to everyone, touching to few. Everyone sees how you appear, few touch what you are.
—Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapter XVIII

How Many Are the Kinds of Bodies and in What Modes They Should Be Adorned

ALL HUMAN MALE BODIES ARE EITHER DIMINUTIVE, OF MEDIUM height, or tall; and slender, muscular or of superfluous girth. Now, men may look good either due to fortune or virtue. But since Fortune's powers are unfortunately beyond our control, our natural appearance may be pleasing or not according to her whims. Thus a man must have recourse to his own virtue if he is to look presentable on all occasions; and this virtue consists in the exercise of the body and the mind. I shall leave out reasoning on exercising the body, since that has been treated at length by those who understand it. I will discuss only the exercise of the mind, by learning which clothes best suit which forms. As Xenophon wrote in his life of Cyrus, it is not reasonable that a big man wear a little coat, or a small man wear a big coat, and expect to look smart. Since tailored clothing can make a man look either rakish or ridiculous, as well as shorter or taller or fatter or thinner, it is necessary for him to choose models, fabrics, and patterns that flatter his shape while minimizing its defects.

Of Average Men

For men of average height and build, the rules are simple: the average man can wear whatever he wants. Nonetheless, the rules discussed below apply to him especially, because his commonness makes him less able to carry off eccentricities of detail. But in terms of fabric, pattern, and model, his choices are limited only by the occasion. Thus the average man should feel free to wear linens in the summer, flannels in the winter, glen plaids to the office, and chalk stripes to dinner parties; he may choose single- or double-breasted jackets, button-down or spread collars, and lace-up or slip-on shoes. He should only contrive to avoid looking ridiculous, as was said.

Of Diminutive Men

But the difficulties reside in all those who are not average. I begin with the diminutive man, who wishes to look taller. The universally recommended modes are to wear only suits made of worsted cloth and to avoid patterns. For most woolen cloths, such as flannels and tweeds, are bulky and thus make one look wider rather than taller; and patterns achieve the same effect by emphasizing unhelpful horizontal lines. Because they encourage the eye to move up and down, stripes are recommended for the short man, provided they are not too far apart. Solids ought also to be a staple of the

short man's wardrobe, as they make him look slimmer and thus taller. And short men always look better in suits than in odd jackets and trousers, because the latter cut him in half visually. As to neckwear, solids elongate best, while discreet stripes and small patterns can be worn without harm; and ties any wider than three inches should be avoided.

For an example, there is Ross Perot, who attires his tiny frame only in dark worsteds—either solid or striped—always in a solid shirt, and usually in a striped tie. Fortunately for Mr. Perot, the dress codes of both business and politics coincide almost exactly with those modes that most recommend for the short.

But others have shown greater virtue in attiring themselves. Edward G. Robinson and James Cagney employed other modes, such as wearing their trousers at the natural waist—that is, so that they fasten approximately at the belly button. This elongates the appearance of the legs and shortens the torso, thereby promoting an illusion of height. At the other end, their trousers were always long enough to remain in contact with their shoes even when walking.

They also wore shorter jackets because the longer his jacket, the shorter a short man looks, much of his legs being lost under all that extra cloth. Reason requires of all men that their jackets always adequately cover their behinds; in the case of the diminutive man, it is imperative that it extend no further. Nor should sleeves extend beyond the wrist bone, for overlong sleeves make you look a boy wearing your father's jacket, in which case you will not be taken seriously. And your jackets should be nipped in at the waist rather than hang straight, for this has a slimming effect. I wish to add here that a jacket with higher shoulder pads is an absolute boon to the diminutive man, because the raised collar and shoulder line increases the sense of height more than any other mode. When such jackets have lapels with high notches, so much the better.

And if you consider these things carefully and observe them in the films of Cagney and Robinson, you will see that, though diminutive, they never appeared distractingly short but always well-proportioned and elegant.

TURNING NOW TO THE OTHER MODES, I SAY THAT SOME RECOMMEND three-button jackets for the short man, and others two. And since the shorter lapels of a three button jacket make him look like a sawed-off Oliver Hardy, the short man is better off with two, since longer lapels emphasize the vertical line. Nonetheless, should a three-button jacket's lapels be rolled to the middle button—that is, made so that the top button is purely

decorative, or what tailors call "idle"—then it is acceptable or even helpful, for the lapels on such a jacket tend to be narrower, and the idle button and buttonhole, though never closed, slightly add to the illusion of verticality.

And, as is the common understanding, diminutive men should not wear double-breasted jackets. Their extra flap of cloth in front increases your sense of bulk; their double set of buttons increases your sense of width; and their peaked lapels add an additional pair of horizontal lines. The net effect is to make you look like a fireplug, and men who look like fireplugs look ridiculous. Yet in spite of these dangers, many diminutive men nonetheless wear double-breasted garments.

And truly it is a very natural and ordinary thing to desire to be well-attired, and always, when men wear stylish garments who can, they will be praised or not blamed; but when they cannot, and wear them anyway, here lie the error and the blame. Thus the short man who is drawn to double-breasted jackets should consider instead single-breasted jackets with peaked lapels. Despite the absence of this garment from the department stores, it is nonetheless quite proper—and, because of its smartness and its rarity, is greatly favored by dandies. And if someone should say: but peaked lapels add to the horizontal line, I reply with the reasons given above: that it is the double row of buttons and extra fabric of double-breasted suits that create the added sense of width, and make peaked lapels look like the arms of a fire hydrant, whereas on single breasted suits they look rakish. From this one may draw a general rule that never or rarely fails: whatever accentuates the way your body is, at the expense of how it should appear, however much you may love it, it cannot be worn.

Of Tall Men

Tall men tend to look gawky, gangly or gaunt; in sum rather like Ichabod Crane. Heavier cloths, such as flannels and tweeds, and also busier patterns, such as plaids and windowpanes, make him look more substantial and less like a beanpole. And in the case of shirtings, checks are most efficacious; in neckwear, stripes; and in accessories, boldness and clutter: the tall man's breast pocket should always house a handkerchief; his shirts should take cufflinks; his tie can be bold and should always be clipped; and collar bars also help. Stripes, whether on suits or shirts, do not help the tall man, and even cause great harm if they are thin and close together. And he ought to avoid bow ties, especially with suits and always in the absence of a vest.

The tall man should never wear skimpy or tight-fitting clothes, for they only make him look leaner and thus taller; as do jackets with square, built-up shoulders or narrow lapels, or that have no vents, or that do not cover his seat, since nothing contributes more to a tall man's ruin than a short jacket. If he can find a jacket with shoulders that extend slightly beyond his natural width, so much the better; but he must take care that they are not so broad as to suggest NFL equipment.

And . . . double-breasted jackets are most useful for the tall, because their double row of buttons and extra flap of cloth add to the sense of width at the expense of height, and also because all those buttons and the peaked lapels augment that clutter praised above. But his double-breasted suits should never be buttoned at the bottom button but always at the waist, for the long lapel roll effects an illusion of height that he does not need.

In terms of detail, the more the better. Thus the tall man's jacket should always have four outside pockets, and except for the breast pocket, these should always have flaps. Now, most jackets seen in America will only have three pockets—one over the left breast, and one over each hip. This imparts an extra touch of panache to your clothes, and adds to the clutter that de-emphasizes the vertical line. On trousers, cuffs are essential, as are pleats, because their extra cloth and fullness add bulk.

With respect to shirts, aside from including checks, small plaids, and horizontal and busy antique stripes in his wardrobe, he must also (assuming that like most tall men his neck is long) assure that his collars sit higher than is the norm on most ready-made shirts, lest all that protruding neck make him look like a stork. Boldly patterned and brightly colored ties work better for him than for other men, although striped ties, because they break up verticality, are the most beneficial.

And I wish the example of talk show host Conan O'Brien to suffice. Architecturally, his clothes are sound. But in no other respect do they benefit his lofty frame. And this is doubtless due to the influence of some media image consultant or network wardrobe prince who professes knowledge of what ought to be worn on television. And truly if his client were a politician or some other burdened by the necessity that he offend no one, the advice would be sound. But in the case of a show business personality, it is harmful, for people expect those with more money, more fame, and more delightful jobs than themselves to be more stylish; and when they are not, do not trust them, for they consider that all that opportunity afforded them has been squandered.

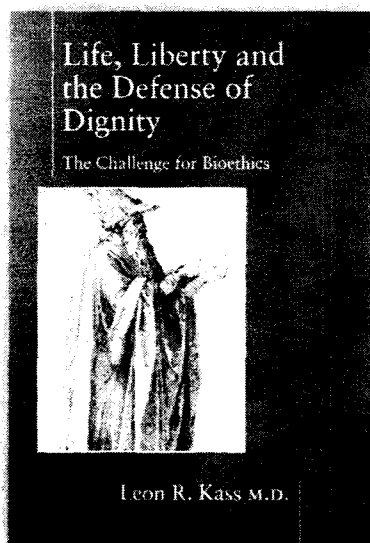
So in all Conan makes these five errors: he does not wear patterns; always wears dark worsteds; never wears a handkerchief nor any other detail or accessory; rarely wears striped ties; does not wear double-breasted jackets. Yet these errors would not hurt him if he did not make a sixth: wearing three-button single-breasted jackets with lapels rolled to the top button. For these jackets are most deleterious to the tall man, because their high button stance and narrow lapels make for an excess of cloth in the chest that covers so much shirt and tie which, when exposed, help to break up verticality. And if someone should suggest that he wear his jacket unbuttoned, I reply that nothing is more sloppy, especially for the tall man, for his jacket being of necessity longer, there is more of it flapping about and drawing attention away from his face. And so a prudent tall man will eschew these errors, and attire himself more in the mode of Fox anchor Brit Hume, who adheres to the rules set forth above.



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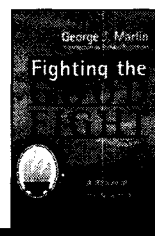
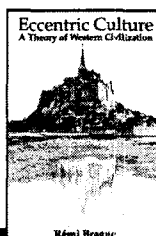
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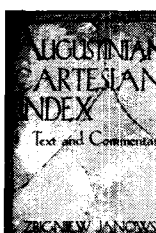
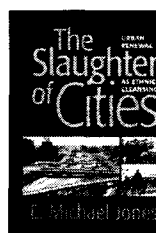
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Anthony de Jasay is the author of *Social Contract*, *Free Ride* (1989), *Choice, Contract, Consent* (1991), *Against Politics* (1997), and *The State* (1998), also published by Liberty Fund.

The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy

By William Paley

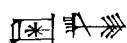
Foreword by D. L. Le Mahieu

This classic work by William Paley was one of the most popular texts on moral philosophy in England and America in the early nineteenth century. Its significance lies in the fact that it marks an important point at which eighteenth-century “whiggism” began to be transformed into nineteenth-century “liberalism.”

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D. L. Le Mahieu is Hotchkiss Presidential Professor at Lake Forest College in Illinois. He is also the author of *The Mind of William Paley: A Philosopher and His Age* (1976) and *A Culture for Democracy* (1988).



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